JUDEA

FROM

CYRUS TO TITUS

537 B.C. TO 70 A.D.



JERUSALEM, FROM THE ROAD LEADING TO BETHANY.

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537 B.C.—70 A.D.

BY

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CHICAGO
A. C. McCLURG AND COMPANY
1899

PREFACE.

WHEN, two years ago, I wrote the Preface to "Spain in the Nineteenth Century," I believed that book would be the last of its series. I have since thought that I should feel more satisfaction in my work if it were completed by a volume to be called "Up to Date," which would gather up the fragments that remained to be told to the close of the nineteenth century, which, I am assured, will not be until midnight of December 31, 1900.

In the meantime, I have gone far out of the track of my work on the Nineteenth Century, and offer to my readers six hundred years of Jewish history, from Cyrus to Titus (537 B.C. to 70 A.D.).

I was led to undertake the present volume by having been selected several years ago by Messrs. Roberts Bros., of Boston (who then held the copyright for an English and American translation of Renan's "Histoire du Peuple d'Israël), to translate the fourth and fifth volumes.

I was not eager for the work, as I did not believe I should be in sympathy with the Biblical views of the great historian. But before I completed my translation (for which I claim strict fidelity to the original), I had become deeply interested in the

period of history of which it treats, and also was much surprised to find how very little I had previously known about it. To me those six centuries were practically a blank space in Jewish history. Matthew seemed to follow Malachi, and Nehemiah, after a brief interval, to be succeeded by Herod. It therefore appeared to me probable that that part of the public, which I love to designate as "my *own* readers," if no better informed than myself, might derive pleasure, as I had done, by being more fully acquainted with a period that had interested me greatly.

When I had consented to undertake the translation of the last two volumes of Renan's "Peuple d'Israël," I grew alarmed on finding in the notes how much Greek and Hebrew I should be expected to copy.

When I went to boarding school in a great cathedral town in England (a good deal more than half a century ago) no young lady was taught the dead languages. I remember, too, what surprise was expressed among us when a member of Parliament sent word that he wished his daughter to have lessons in German. We learned French and Italian, the piano and the harp, drawing (taught by a future R.A.), and dancing in perfection, with court courtesies that we might be prepared for future "presentation." We also learned a small quantity of grammar, history, and geography. Of the latter we studied only Europe, Asia, and Africa, for I never knew a girl who stayed long enough at school to reach the later chapters of the geography-book which contained America.

But to return to my translation. Although totally ignorant of Greek and Hebrew, I was fortunate enough to succeed in copying all the notes in the fourth and fifth volumes of the "Histoire du Peuple d'Israël," and when my manuscript was submitted to one of the gentlemen connected with Harvard University, I was delighted to find I had made only two or three blunders.

Again, to return to my subject (for this Preface seems as discursive as an essay by De Quincy), I would like to say, in case I am accused of having drawn too largely on the volumes I translated (especially in the two chapters relating to Herod), that having as a translator already written on the subject, it was hard to retranslate what I wished my book should say into other words. Therefore it may be thought that some parts of my work retain too strong a flavor of Renan, though I have been conscientious, I think, in my quotation-marks and references; and the facts are all such as may be found in the works of other historians.

I would also ask my readers to remember that I had the kind permission of Messrs. Roberts Bros., and Messrs. Little, Brown, & Co. (who now own the copyright), to make what reasonable use I pleased of my own translation.

I have never taken pleasure in a bird's-eye view of an extensive landscape, nor in a similar view of a wide range of history. It seemed to me that the interest of my readers would be best awakened if I took a prominent personage in each period and grouped around him the events and people among

whom he lived. Also I thought that by connecting this dark period of Jewish history with the better known history of the world in general I should add an attractive feature to my narrative — for this book is *narrative;* not history in the higher sense of the word.

I would also draw attention to the fact that I have touched upon no points of controversy or Biblical criticism; to have done so would have been to wander out of my track into rough places, through which I should have neither inclination nor ability to find my way. I have not even given an opinion as to whether passages in the Book of Daniel, on all hands conceded to apply to the career of Antiochus Epiphanes, were prophetical or historical.

Pray take, dear reader, the facts that I now offer you as simple narrative. They have been gathered from many sources, and carefully collated. And if the period of history I have chosen interests you as much as it has interested me, I think that you will find the information in my book not unattractive.

Bonnywood, Howard Co., Md.,
October, 1899.

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ARABIA

JUDEA.

CHAPTER I.

CYRUS THE GREAT.

"I AM Cyrus, the king of legions; the great king; the powerful king, the King of Babylon; the King of Sumer and Accad;[1] the King of the Four Zones; the son of Cambyses, the great king, the King of Elam; the grandson of Cyrus, the great king; the great-grandson of Teïspes, the great king, the King of Elam; of the ancient seed royal, whose rule has been beloved by Bel and Nebo, whose sovereignty they have cherished according to the goodness of their hearts."

It is thus that in the latter years of his reign Cyrus[2] describes himself. He speaks of himself also in his inscriptions as one "who ruled in justice and righteousness," and who "was righteous in heart and hand."

This was no vain boast. His character is exhibited in his acts, which bear witness to his tolerance in religion, his sagacity, and his humanity. Greek historians, though they overload his history with legends, bear testimony to his wisdom, clemency, and worth. Herodotus says the Persians called him "the father of his people," a title they assuredly never gave to any previous king who had ruled in Nineveh or Babylon. Ammianus calls him "the amiable prince" of the Oriental world; Æschylus speaks of him as "generous;" Xenophon lauds the clemency and wisdom of his

[1] Sumer—Susiania. Accad—the northern province of Babylonia.

[2] Cyrus the Great: Kurush in Persian; Kurash in Assyrian; Korash in Hebrew; Kyros in Greek.

government; Plutarch declares that in wisdom, virtue, and magnanimity, he surpassed all kings.

About the middle of the sixth century before Christ this "amiable prince" and mighty conqueror, claiming to be (as indeed he was) an especial instrument in the hand of Heaven, made his appearance in Eastern lands. He was, as he tells us, an Elamite, but his line, which ruled over the brave and hardy bowmen who inhabited that mountain region, was not the same that had raided the cities of southern Palestine in the days of Lot, and had been pursued and discomfited by Abram. The Elamites, formidable by their skill in archery, had been able to maintain their independence and to make themselves respected, even by the most warlike Assyrian kings, until the time of Assur-bani-pal, the king who carried away the Ten Tribes from Galilee and Samaria, about forty years before Nebuchadnezzar deported 200,000 captives from Judea and Jerusalem. But three generations before the days of Cyrus, Teïspes, son of Achæmenes, a Persian prince, won for himself the sovereignty of Elam, and bequeathed his crown to his posterity. Cyrus was therefore of Persian descent. His religion was probably that of the Elamites. "Doubtless," says a modern Scotch writer, [1] "Aryan and Semitic blood mingled in his veins. He combined in himself the qualities of both races, and was fitted as no conqueror had been before to enlist under one banner the forces of a high civilization and comparative barbarism the men of the plains and of the mountains, the worshippers of Bel and Ormazd."

The twenty years that elapsed after the death of Nebuchadnezzar (561 B.C.) were years of revolt and anarchy throughout the Babylonian Empire, and were marked in the court circle by deeds of treachery and murder. By such means Nabonidos, a general, gained the throne in 553 B.C. He was extremely unpopular. His western provinces revolted while Astyages, king of the Medes, on his north-

[1] Rev. P. Hay Hunter, author of "After the Exile," published in 1890.

eastern frontier, was preparing with a large army to attack him in Babylonia. This purpose was unexpectedly frustrated by the youthful Cyrus, who with "a little army" marched against the Medians. On the eve of battle the troops of Astyages mutinied, seized their commander, and delivered him to the young King of Elam, who with his troops thus reinforced marched at once to the Median capital, the strongly fortified city of Ecbatana.

Nabonidos, on a tablet found twenty years ago in Babylonia, and brought to England by Mr. Rassam, celebrates this event as a deliverance for Babylon, and hails Cyrus as a favored son of Merodach, who had given him the victory.

Cyrus treated his captive, King Astyages, with kindness and courtesy. He made him satrap, or governor, of Hyrcania, an outlying district bordering on the Black Sea, and is said by Greek historians to have married his daughter. The chief wife of Cyrus was, however, a princess of his own race, an Achæmenian, and his marriage established a precedent for alliances with the same royal race, which was followed by his posterity. His queen's name, as given by the Greek historians, was Kassandenê. They describe her as a woman of great ability, who had much influence over her husband. Cyrus was deeply attached to her, and at her death caused great mourning to be made for her throughout his empire.

Two years after Cyrus had conquered Media he added Persia to his dominions. After which Nabonidos, who had hailed the young conqueror as his deliverer, began to fear him. The people in all the provinces of the mighty empire over which he ruled were restless; his armies were not what they had been in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. All over his dominions people of alien races, who, like the Jews, had been led away captive from their own lands, were watching for an opportunity either to break into revolt or to undermine the power of their oppressors. All eyes were beginning to be turned on the young prince, now King of Elam, Media, and Persia; some looked to him with expectation, some with fear. But to the Jews the

name of Cyrus was a star of hope. It had been uttered by one of their great Prophets, who had spoken of him as God's "shepherd," and His people's deliverer; while Persians, Medes, and Elamites looked eagerly to him as the commander who would lead them into the fertile plains of Mesopotamia, and to the conquest of Babylon. But it took Cyrus many years to work out this design, which he had entertained from the beginning.

Nabonidos did not reside in Babylon, but in a suburban city. He put his army under command of his son, Belshazzar, whom he made King of Babylon, and massed his forces in Accad, the northern province of Babylonia. He himself preferred to remain inactive. No good is reported of him in history. He had been bred a priest, and seems to have taken an interest in archæology, as there is a record that he rejoiced greatly at the unearthing of an ancient tablet relating to Assyrian history in days prior to the date of the migration of Abraham. He had never been a faithful worshipper of the tutelary gods of Babylon. He had neglected Bel (Merodach) and Nebo. Their priests were bitterly opposed to him, and he drew upon himself the hatred of the provincials by a measure to which he had recourse when Cyrus closed in upon him, and reduced him to despair. He resolved to placate Bel and Nebo by bringing into their temples, and humbling before their shrines, the tutelary idols of his outlying provinces, while at the same time he would take steps to stamp out the foreign religions which had in many places been planted on Babylonian soil.

A persecution of the Jews began. Up to that time their religion and their customs, though treated by the rude populace with contempt, had been officially tolerated. Many Jews had been engaged in commerce, and had acquired wealth; others had had offices of trust committed to them; but now, in common with other alien tribes, their religious observances were no longer to be tolerated.

From remote provinces, idols (the local divinities of large districts and of populous cities) were brought to

Babylon and set up in the temples of Bel and Nebo, not for worship, but humiliation. As the Jews had no idols that could be degraded thus, their punishment was meted out to them by personal ill-treatment. Numbers apostatized, in order to save their property or their lives, but a pious remnant stood firm, and watched for the coming of Cyrus, their promised deliverer.

Alas! Cyrus did not come. He crossed the Tigris at the fords of Arbela, was soon after met by the force under Belshazzar, fought a battle in which he gained no decided advantage, and turned back into Media. Hope waned for a season.

Next year Cyrus made the same attempt, and was again discomfited.[1] For nearly ten years he postponed his design of overthrowing the Babylonian empire and installing himself in its capital. His policy was to strip Babylon of her outlying provinces, and not to attack the central power until all men should behold her naked and undone. In 539, after conquering Asia Minor, and extending his dominions from the mountains of Afghanistan to the Mediterranean sea, he made his third attempt to reach Babylon, "that great city," and to dethrone Nabonidos. He advanced this time, not from the north or east, but through the southern provinces of the empire, where men's minds were especially embittered against Nabonidos on account of the insults he had offered to their gods.

Cyrus was not — as was believed by historians and commentators until the discovery of original autobiographical documents — a monotheist, a disciple of Zoroaster. He may have had some tincture of that religion, derived from Persian ancestors, but to the Babylonians he announced himself as the servant and vicegerent of Merodach, sent to punish those who had degraded and defamed their tutelary gods.

[1] It was during one of these expeditions that the event took place on which the legend connecting itself with Sardanapalus has been founded. A Chaldean vassal king, rather than yield, made of his treasures a funeral pyre, on which he immolated himself and his household.

The religious position that Cyrus took seems to have been that Merodach "the god of gods, the god of heaven, the pure and the supreme," was his own personal deity. Other gods might find places in his pantheon as secondary divinities, and might be invoked as mediators and intermediaries between himself and Merodach his lord; while among their hereditary worshippers in their own cities or provinces they ought to be reverenced and feared.

Cyrus, on his final invasion of Babylonia, marched with a vast army, which he himself describes as "innumerable, like the waters of a river." He fought one pitched battle with the half-hearted forces of Nabonidos, met with success, and encountered no further opposition. All towns opened their gates to him, and left him an uninterrupted road to the capital. Nabonidos fled within its walls and sought a hiding-place. When a division of the Persian army under a lieutenant approached the mighty walls of the great city the brazen gates were thrown open, and with no effort to defend itself world-famous Babylon fell.[1]

Nabonidos was discovered. He was bound with chains,

[1] No mention, of course, is made in the inscriptions of Belshazzar's feast on the eve of his destruction. But historically speaking, it is not improbable that after his defeat within no great distance from his capital, he made his way to his own city of Babylon. His father, Nabonidos, was already there, and fearing the Babylonian populace as much as he did Cyrus, he was in hiding. It would have been quite in character for a Babylonian prince to have held a great carouse even when threatened with impending danger. "And that night," says the Biblical account of the fall of Babylon, "was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain," — thus corroborating the account in the inscription, that the gates were thrown open by those within, without assault or fighting. Moreover, the name of Belshazzar never again occurs in the inscriptions, which assuredly it would have done had he been living and taken prisoner. "And Darius the Median," continues the Scriptural account, "took the kingdom." Darius, for Cyrus, may be the error of a transcriber misled by the account of the Greek historians, who have confounded the taking of Babylon by the army of Cyrus with a subsequent siege when the city revolted against Darius Nothus, and was taken by him under the circumstances related by Herodotus and récopied from him.

and a few months later died a prisoner, receiving from Cyrus and his son a royal funeral. All this is not told us by Greek historians, although they claimed, a hundred years after these events, to have consulted Persian archives; but in the summer of 1879, some Arabs digging in the Birs Nimrud unearthed a broken cylinder of clay, written all over with an account of the taking of Babylon. It is now in the British Museum. Apparently it had been deposited by Cyrus among the archives in the great temple of Merodach in Babylon. It is barrel-shaped, about nine inches long, with a diameter of rather more than four inches in the middle. It contained originally about one thousand words in Babylonian cuneiform writing, — that is, with letters that are wedge-shaped. We have also an annalistic tablet found by Mr. Rassam among Babylonian ruins, on which Cyrus has recorded the events of the latter years of Nabonidos' reign, and those of the first year of his own rule as King of Babylon.

It may be interesting to readers not familiar with archæology to read what Cyrus had to say of himself when he took possession of his new capital in October, 539 B.C. "I entered Babylon in peace," he records upon his cylinder; "the magnates and the priests kissed my feet. They rejoiced in my coming. Their faces shone."

Any distinct idea of a Divinity who was the God of the whole earth, the Ruler and Benefactor of all mankind, is nowhere to be found in the heathen world, although all mythologies seem to have had some conception of a supreme god who had power over the other deities; an idea probably derived from some primeval revelation concerning the Lord Almighty. Each province and city in the pagan world had its local god, who had in charge the welfare of his worshippers, and of their province or city.[1] To him was due a certain form of devotion; and strangers who settled in the territory under his protection were bound to adopt the local religion.

[1] Much as patron saints in the middle ages were looked up to by the peasantry as honored guardians of some mediæval city.

Formerly Cyrus was supposed to have been a follower of Zoroaster; but the religion of Zoroaster was not the religion of the land of his birth, and he was not even a monotheist, as we now know by the inscriptions on his tablets and cylinder. He may possibly have had some vague conception of a God of the whole universe, whom in Babylon he called Merodach, in Persia, Ormazd, and in dealings with the Jews, the God of Heaven; and Jewish scribes, when copying his proclamations (though undoubtedly no subject would have dared to change one word that set forth his sovereign's will, or that altered his titles), may have conceived themselves justified in translating the name and titles of Merodach, "the Great God," "the God of Heaven," into that of their own Jehovah. This is the more likely because the decree of Cyrus authorizing the return of the Jewish exiles was, as we have it, copied by Ezra, at least eighty years after the great king's death, from the original document preserved by the Jews as the charter of their liberation. In all respects, except the insertion of the word "Jehovah," the decree is almost an exact transcript, not only in style, but even in words, of what Cyrus wrote upon his cylinder.

One of his first acts, when he found himself firmly seated at Babylon on his imperial throne, was to reverse the religious policy of his predecessor.

He issued an edict by which all people of various nations and languages in his dominions who, like the Jews, had been led into captivity, should be allowed to return to their own lands, taking with them the captive images of their local gods.

"I assembled all those nations," he says upon his cylinder, "and I caused them to go back to their own countries."

Among these nations were the Jews, and they must have had peculiar claims to the consideration of the new ruler. Doubtless he was shown his own name in their books of prophecy. It is certain they had exulted over his first successes, and had been persecuted in consequence; it is possible that they had even intrigued to procure his peace-

able entry into his great capital. Many of them too had become rich and influential men, as we know from the tablets of the great banking-house that have been so wonderfully preserved for us.

Of the motives of Cyrus for the favor shown the Jews, we are not told either by history or in Scripture, but we know that in the year 538 B.C. he issued a decree, which has been preserved for us by Ezra, which was duplicated in Babylon, copied on papyrus, and laid up among royal archives in the muniment room of the seven-walled fortress of Ecbatana, where the kings of Babylon in summer continued to reside.

"Thus saith Cyrus, King of Persia: The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? His God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (he is the God) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver and with gold, and with goods and with beasts, beside the free-will offering for the house of God which is at Jerusalem."

It is possible that Cyrus also may have seen in the restoration of the Jews to their own land, and in the building of their hill fortress on the Temple Mount, a stroke of policy. He probably expected that a much larger proportion of his Jewish subjects in Babylonia would take advantage of his generosity than the miserable remnant, one tenth of whom were priests or temple servitors, who followed Zerubbabel back to Jerusalem; and as he intended to extend his authority to Egypt, the only part of the old Babylonian Empire which had not yet submitted to his sway, he may have felt the importance of such a stronghold as Jerusalem might become in the hands of a grateful and warlike population, as a protection to his line of communication with his own land.

Cyrus probably concerned himself little about prophecies

which fixed the duration of the Captivity of the Jewish people. But reckoning from the year 597 B.C., when Nebuchadnezzar had carried away the first Judean captives, sixty years had all but passed when the edict was issued permitting their return. The destruction of the Temple, of the walls of Jerusalem, and the national life of the Jews, was, however, half a century anterior to the return of the repatriated exiles by imperial permission in 537 B.C.

Resident in Babylon and held in high estimation by his countrymen, was Zerubbabel the Prince of Judah, the lineal descendant of David; and, had there been any question of national revolt, he would have been his nation's lawful sovereign. To him was assigned the honor of leading back to their own land the band of pious enthusiasts who were disposed to take advantage of the royal decree. It was not inconsistent with Babylonian policy to make an ex-king or a possible pretender ruler over some outlying district, with authority over the very people who would naturally be most attached to him. Cyrus seems to have had no fear whatever of the pretensions of Zerubbabel, but the Jews, animated by their national hope that a prince of David's line should restore again the kingdom of Israel, take signal vengeance on their enemies, and put all heathen nations under his feet, were exultant when they set forth, a small but eager company, headed by their prince, and by Joshua their high-priest, who was descended from Zadok of the house of Aaron.

Both prince and pontiff had been born in Babylon, and neither had ever exercised royal rule or priestly functions. The prince could not govern without a kingdom, the high-priest needed the Temple to perform his service to the Lord Jehovah.

Zerubbabel was grandson of Jechoniah, the young king who had reigned in Jerusalem three months, was then carried off by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 B.C., and kept thirty-six years in captivity, until he was released and kindly treated by Evil-Merodach, Nebuchadnezzar's successor. Possibly his captivity was less rigorous than that of a prisoner in a

dungeon. He may (like Saint Paul afterwards in Rome) have had the alleviation of intercourse with his relatives and countrymen. At any rate he had a son born to him, probably in Babylon, Shealtiel or Salathiel, who was the father of Zerubbabel.

The high-priest Joshua, the son of Jozadak, was descended from Zadok, who by authority of Solomon had superseded Abiathar, the high-priest under David, who had followed through good and ill the chequered fortunes of his sovereign. This appointment of Zadok to be high-priest, though on the part of Solomon a stroke of policy, was really the fulfilment of prophecy. Zadok was the descendant of Phineas, the son of Aaron; Abiathar was descended from Ithamar, another son. To the house of Ithamar belonged Eli and his wicked sons; and their deposition from the chief-priesthood fulfilled the word of the Lord, which was spoken to Eli; "And it shall come to pass that every one that is left in thine house shall come and crouch to him [the chief-priest] for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say: Put me, I pray thee, into somewhat about the priesthood that I may eat a piece of bread."

The band of pilgrims led by prince and pontiff, by no means included all the Jews in Babylonia. Seventy years before, Nebuchadnezzar had carried off 200,000 captives, and tens of thousands more when he finally destroyed Jerusalem. Besides these, the descendants of the Ten Tribes were settled in the land. But the return was not popular. "Many stayed behind," says Josephus, "being unwilling to leave their possessions." And in truth the prospect before the band of returning exiles was not a cheering one, unless they were animated by Messianic hopes which centred on Zerubbabel, the son of David, and the reconstruction of the House of God. Many Jews had adopted the idea that Jehovah might be worshipped in spirit and in truth, by prayer, by acquaintance with the sacred records, and by observance of the Law, without sacrifices, without a mercy-seat, without the Temple.

Of the 42,360 exiles who followed Zerubbabel and Joshua (besides 7337 household servants), one-tenth were priests, and 245 were singers and subordinates in the service of the Temple. Among these there were only 74 Levites. Already there may have been disaffection in the priestly tribe, a schism grounded on jealousy in the family of Aaron. Ezekiel, whose authority among his countrymen in Babylonia had been very great, had clearly indicated that only the posterity of Zadok were eligible to high offices in the priesthood. Other members of the family of Aaron, and all other descendants of Levi were relegated to inferior offices in the Temple service. The Levites and the excluded descendants of Ithamar resented this. A schism was already growing between the two orders of Aaronic priests, and also between priests and Levites, the wealthy and the poor.

It has been supposed by some that the number 42,360 represented only the heads of families, but this is altogether improbable. We know that when the exiles reached the promised land it was a very small number that gathered round the ruined walls of Jerusalem. We know also that at this day a camel for two pilgrims is the very least allowed to travellers in a caravan that is to cross a desert in Central Asia. This caravan had only 435 camels, 736 horses, 245 mules, 6720 asses. There could have been few women or children among the travellers, for lack of transportation; while they had in addition to provide for the conveyance of provisions, of household goods, and of the treasures with which Cyrus had intrusted them, — the restored vessels of gold, silver, and less precious metals, plundered by Nebuzardan from the desecrated Temple. Four-fifths of the party must have made the five months' journey on foot; they must have had with them also flocks and herds, from which to make sacrificial offerings on their arrival at the former site of the city of Jerusalem.

It is no wonder that worldly men who had acquired position and wealth in Babylon were not disposed to quit their homes, and to set forth, hardly knowing whither they

went, or what were their future prospects, to recolonize the land of their fathers, to recultivate waste fields, and to rebuild ruined cities, even if the chief object of the expedition was to restore the worship of Jehovah in the sacred city. They gave freely of their wealth to further the purposes of their younger, more enthusiastic, more patriotic countrymen, but they stayed behind, unwilling to exchange comfortable homes and brightening business prospects for inevitable hardships and problematical glory.

A certain revenge was taken upon them for this indifference. A list of all heads of families, and their followers, who had joined the emigration, was drawn up and deposited among the archives stored in Jerusalem. Thenceforward all whose names were found therein constituted the aristocracy. The Roll of the Congregation was to the Jew what the Roll of Battle Abbey was afterwards to the Normans.

Cyrus restored them all the gold and silver vessels of the Temple, and as we read the record we are astonished at their number. He sent also an escort to protect them through the desert. These treasures were delivered into the care of Sheshbazzar, called in the record the Prince of Judah, and therefore commonly identified with Zerubbabel. But it is hard to understand why Zerubbabel should have had two Babylonian names, Zerubbabel already signifying "one born in Babylon."

Among the holy furnishings of Solomon's Temple the Ark of the Covenant, with the sacred objects it contained, had held the first place. It was the sign of the Divine Presence in the Wilderness, in the Tabernacle at Shiloh, and in Solomon's Temple. It was wanting in the Second Temple. A Jewish tradition said it was buried on the Temple Mount, on a spot afterwards covered by the store of wood used on the Altar of Sacrifice. No allusion is made to its loss in the books of Ezra or Nehemiah. It was probably destroyed when the First Temple was pillaged by the army of Nebuzardan, the lieutenant of Nebuchadnezzar. Neither was the sacred breastplate — the Urim and Thummim — found among the restored treasures, nor

the cherubim with wings that overspread the mercy-seat. Thenceforward when the Holy of Holies was rebuilt there was nothing in it. Pompey and Titus both saw it empty, and were impressed by this evidence of the spiritual worship of the God of the Jews.

The caravan of repatriated exiles set forth from Babylon in the same month (March) in which their ancestors, almost a thousand years before (1491 B.C.), began their journey after deliverance from Egyptian bondage. But though small were their numbers, and doubtful as must have seemed to many the issue of their enterprise, there were some who felt confident that the glory of this new deliverance from captivity would surely surpass all that had gone before. No longer would men say: "As Jehovah liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;" but, "As Jehovah liveth which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them."[1]

The band of pilgrims, animated by hope, confident in divine help, and buoyed up by half-understood prophecy, set out on their long march with enthusiasm. They were accompanied on the first stage of their journey by friends and relatives, dancing gayly to the strains of the tabret and flute. As caravans of Mussulmans still cross the deserts of Central Asia on their way to Mecca, singing hymns as they march on, so bands of choristers and musicians, for there were many of these among the pilgrims, chanted songs of praise for the great deliverance. Their prince rode in their midst, and many secret hopes were fixed on such a leader. The Levites bore on high the sacred vessels of the Temple; "the Lord Jehovah was their strength and their song, and had become their salvation."

We know no particulars of the five months' journey. It was apparently without events. The caravan probably followed the great northern road over which, fifty years before, their ancestors had been driven by the cruel whips

[1] Jeremiah xxiii. 7, 8.

of the soldiers of Nebuzardan. They probably set forth by what was called the Royal Road along the right bank of the Euphrates, past the mounds of ruined Nineveh, past Ur of the Chaldees, associated with the history of Abraham, where was the great temple of Bel Merodach the moon god. For in Babylonian mythology the moon took precedence of the sun, and was the first among divinities. In the Assyrian speech, as in Germany to this day, the moon was masculine, and the sun feminine. Leaving the shores of the great river, the caravan commenced its march across the desert, a hard, dry plain, with neither mountains, forest, nor streams to break its wearisome monotony. They may have skirted the mountains of Lebanon and passed by Aleppo and Damascus, if they entered Palestine on its northern boundary.

The exiles after their toilsome journey came at last to Jerusalem to gaze with mingled joy and grief upon a scene of desolation.

Already their enthusiastic hopes had received rude shocks by the progress of events. Generously as Cyrus had treated them, he had not proved himself that conquering prince who, they had hoped, would put their foes under their feet; who would proclaim their God to be the God of all gods, and their nation His peculiar people. They had looked for a Deliverer whose garments would be dyed in blood, who would grind to dust such idols as were made of metal or of marble, and burn those made of wood in devouring fire. Instead of this, Cyrus had entered Babylon in peace and triumph, had restored the local idols, and had tamely granted to the Jews permission to return. He had indeed restored them such spoils of their Temple as had been carried to Babylon. He had granted them permission to rebuild the House of their God, but these privileges they shared with other nations. The great king, claiming for himself the honor of the work, had even prescribed the dimensions of God's Temple. He had promised in part to bear the cost of raising it. He had given them a thousand horsemen to see them safe across the Desert. He had sent letters to the

satrap residing in Samaria to see that they should settle unmolested in the neighborhood of Jerusalem. He had made Zerubbabel, their Prince, *pekah* of Judea. But all this was not the triumph they had looked for. Such favor from heathen princes seemed humiliation.

The *pekah* was only governor of an appointed district, with the satrap of the province "beyond the river" for his official superior.

Great must have been the exiles' disappointment and their grief; for doubtless they had looked for some miracle when they beheld the gray desolation of the Temple Mount, and of the sacred city. Only scattered blocks of enormous size lay all around them, and shattered stones detached from ruined walls and ancient buildings.

Around the city foreign settlers had apparently been warned to offer no opposition to the people who brought with them assurances of the great king's protection. No man dwelt among the ruins of Jerusalem; and the returned exiles, for the most part, made shift to take up their quarters in a little belt of land around what had been once their national capital.

We learn from the prophets that Judea had become a sort of no-man's-land, sparsely inhabited, and badly cultivated. The first care of the new-comers was to provide themselves with shelter and the means of subsistence, and by degrees they formed Jewish colonies in outlying towns and villages. These colonies were so important that Tekoa, for example, was disposed to dispute supremacy with Jerusalem.

The inhabitants of the surrounding country, though they offered no forcible opposition to the exiles, were far from receiving them with favor. The Jews who had been suffered to remain upon the soil of Judea had been exclusively men of the lowest class. Some few had kept their faith and maintained their Jewish customs, but the most part had married heathen wives, and their children had been brought up among pagan associations. Few Jews in Babylonia had married women not of their own race; they had

allied themselves scrupulously with other families of their favored nation. The Jews of Judea knew what the returned exiles would think of their apostasy, and dreaded the social disturbances that would be caused by their arrival.

The first thought of the new colonists, as soon as they had secured food and shelter, was to restore the worship of Jehovah on His Sacred Hill. The large body of priests among them, whom the influence of Joshua and the prospect of supreme consideration when the Temple should be built had induced to make the journey, and their smaller following of Levites and inferior servitors of the Temple were stimulated, not only by devotion, but by their worldly interests, to desire the restoration of national worship. These men "lived by the altar;" that is, they were fed from the offerings of fruits, flour, oil, and wine, besides unconsumed parts of the animals offered in sacrifice. They had therefore a personal interest in the early resumption of sacrificial rites. All classes set to work at once to clear away the rubbish on the platform where the Temple had once stood upon the Sacred Hill. They hurried the erection of the altar of burnt-offering, of which they discovered the former foundations, and in September, 537 B. C., all the returned exiles, leaving the building of their homes and the cultivation of their fields, repaired "as one man" to the Sacred Mount to be present at the festivals of the season, when for the first time for half a century priests and Levites once more did their office upon Jewish soil, and the blood of victims daily flowed at morning and at evening.

As soon as the caravan had reached Jerusalem, heads of families had begun to contribute treasure for the rebuilding of the Temple and the restoration of public worship. Free-will offerings were liberally made from treasures brought by them from Babylonia. They also caused priestly garments to be made, so that all was ready when the appointed day arrived for the resumption of public worship. From that hour, for six centuries nothing but the might of

an oppressor suspended the daily sacrifices. Victims were every day provided for morning and for evening sacrifice, and the New Moons and other feasts were celebrated with profusion, in spite of the extreme poverty of the great mass of the people.

CHAPTER II.

ZERUBBABEL, THE PRINCE OF JUDAH.

AS soon as the altar had been set up among ruins on the Holy Mount, all thoughts were turned to the rebuilding of the Temple. Zerubbabel and Joshua had brought with them a copy of the decree of Cyrus, in which after setting forth that the Lord God of Heaven, who had given him all the kingdoms of the earth, had directed him to build for Him a house at Jerusalem, he invited all Jews who might feel so inclined to return to their former capital and there rebuild their Temple, assuring them of his approval and protection.

Very few of the exiles who in 537 B. C. returned to Judea could remember the Temple of Solomon; they knew of its glory only by tradition. The young men were the grandsons of nobles slaughtered at Riblah, or carried captive to Babylon by Nebuzardan; the middle-aged had been born in exile, but Judea was the Land of Promise to God's people, the land of their fathers, the scene of their future hopes, and they looked on it as their home.

The inhabitants of the country surrounding Jerusalem were far from receiving the returned exiles with favor, even though they came under the protection, and with the permission, of the Persian King of Babylon. Zerubbabel, of the royal house, nineteenth in descent from David, had been distinctly appointed by Cyrus *pekah*, or governor, of Judea. The Persian word *Tirshatha* means the same thing. Over him was a sub-satrap living in Samaria, and all Palestine was included in the great satrapy of Syria. The modern dignity of a Turkish pasha answers to that of a Persian satrap, while the Turkish title of the governor of

a district under him, is Caimacan. M. Renan thinks, however, that Zerubbabel had no local jurisdiction. "He was simply," he says, "the head of a religious community, — a *millat-pasch*, as such persons are still called in the Ottoman Empire."

The land in Judea had passed from its former owners, no trade or commerce could be carried on in desolate Jerusalem, and if the returned exiles were to live upon their crops they would need time to raise them. Many who had quitted Babylon with enthusiasm and were now threatened with poverty, may have envied their brethren who stayed in Mesopotamia. Yet, though sick with "hope deferred" and threatened with famine, they still sang with exultation psalms that compared their deliverance from danger on their journey to the miraculous protection afforded to their fathers under Moses in the desert, and the Red Sea.[1]

All thoughts were now fixed on the due performance of sacrificial rites, the regulation of public worship, and its liturgy. In Babylonia the priests and Levites had been without employment, since their office was, not to teach the people, but to preside over Divine worship in the Temple. In their leisure they had indulged themselves in dreams of a perfected ritual; the time had now come, as they conceived, to realize those dreams, and to add complications to the simpler forms of worship prescribed by Moses for the service in the Tabernacle. The regulation of the Temple service proposed by Ezekiel was, however, found as impracticable as his measurements proved to be for the rebuilding of the Temple itself. When the great work was begun, the task of overseeing the workmen was intrusted to the priests and Levites, as in the days of Solomon. Masons and builders were brought, as formerly, from Tyre and Sidon, cedar trees from Lebanon were floated by sea to Joppa, and thence transported forty miles over rough roads to Jerusalem, while stone was quarried

[1] See such Psalms as cxxiv., cxxv., and cxxvi., full of religious fervor and the most beautiful poetry.

from the Sacred Hill itself. The funds needed for these purposes came no doubt from the contributions made by rich men who stayed behind in Babylonia, as well as from the liberal free-will offerings made by Zerubbabel, the heads of families, and even by priests and Levites whose resources were limited.

We read in Ezra, in the Second Book of Chronicles, and in Josephus, of the general rejoicing when Zerubbabel, the prince and leader, laid the foundation of the sacred edifice; of the hymns of praise and thanksgiving that were sung by all the people, with their refrain chanted responsively by priests and worshippers: —

> "Praise the Lord for He is good!
> "For His mercy endureth forever!"

We read too of cries of grief from the voices of ancient men who had seen the first house in its glory, and who mingled the voice of weeping with the shouts of joy.

The Temple thus begun (535 B. C.) might have been finished in four years, but its completion was delayed for twenty. Difficulties arose from the hostility of the people of the land, and frequently no doubt the work was stopped for want of funds, but the chief reason must be sought in the unsettled condition of the Persian Empire.

Cyrus, the friend and protector of the Jews, was, during the later years of his life, engaged in distant warfare, and had no time or thought to spare for the affairs of a remote, and (to him) an insignificant people. In the year 532, two years after the Jews with great rejoicing laid the foundation stone of their Temple, he quitted Babylon, leaving there Cambyses, "the son of his heart," as viceroy. For events in the eight years that followed we have as yet discovered no inscription to guide us, and that page of history is a blank. We know that Cyrus built a splendid new city and a palace at Pasargadæ in the mountains lying to the east of Persia; that there he stored great wealth; and that in 529, at the age of sixty-two, he died in battle with a wild and barbarous tribe in the neighborhood of the

Sea of Aral. He was buried at Pasargadæ. His tomb still stands there; it is well preserved, but open and empty. It was intact when visited by Alexander of Macedon, whose historians have described it as a "house upon a pedestal," entered by a low and narrow door. A gilt sarcophagus stood by a couch with massive feet of gold. The walls were hung with Babylonian tapestries. On a table were deposited Persian weapons, some jewels, and the great king's bow, shield, and sword; besides these, there were suits of clothing which probably he had worn. The inscription was an address to whoever might visit the place of sepulture: "O man! I am Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, who founded the greatness of Persia, and ruled Asia. Grudge me not this monument."

When Alexander some months later revisited Pasargadæ he found that others had visited the spot, and that the tomb had been plundered. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* The interest of our modern world in Cyrus rests largely on the favor and encouragement he showed the Jews.

His son Cambyses succeeded him. In part he followed the policy of his father, but he had none of the noble virtues of the deceased king, though modern investigation has discovered that he was not the monster of vice and of insane folly that Greek historians have represented him. Like other Oriental sovereigns he feared the rivalry of his near relations, and was especially jealous of the popularity of his brother (or probably half-brother) Bardes, or Smerdis, a young prince whom Cyrus had made ruler of a province, but whom he never seems to have loved as he did his eldest son.

Cambyses had Bardes secretly put to death before he set out on an expedition to subdue Egypt. All interest in the Jews ceased at court. The authority of Zerubbabel seems to have received some shock, probably from the jealousy of his official superior, living at Samaria. Judea was rapidly overrun by bands of Persian soldiers on their way to or from Egypt, and we know from Greek historians what havoc was wrought, in lands through which they passed, by these half-

disciplined troops, and still more by their camp followers. There was famine in Judea, crops were laid waste by soldiers on the march; there was no safety, no appeal from the oppressor. Nothing taken was paid for, everything was seized under pretence of military requisition; there was no hire for man or beast; no man could store up property; to lay by money was to put it in a bag with holes.

Cambyses remained five years in Egypt. He worshipped and honored the Egyptian gods; and the story of his having slaughtered their sacred bull is now thought to be disproved by an inscription. He made an unsuccessful expedition to the Soudan, and returned, greatly mortified by his ill-fortune. Then he heard that a conspiracy against him had broken out in his Asiatic dominions. A Magian named Gaumata, who bore some resemblance to the ill-fated Bardes, assumed his character. "The lie grew in the provinces" says an inscription. Cambyses hurried home attended by his soldiers to chastise the impostor and restore his own authority, when in an obscure village of Syria a revolt among his own troops drove him to despair, and he committed suicide. He left no children, and the Magian Gaumata known in history as the pseudo-Smerdis, continued to reign for eight months. His rule was characterized by extreme severity. He put to death by wholesale all who had ever known the true Bardes during his lifetime; nevertheless he was popular, for he promised to remit three years' taxes, and to suspend the conscription.

A conspiracy was formed against him by seven Persian lords, who, in the year 521, entered his palace, overpowered his guards, and slew him with their daggers. They then seated on the throne the leading man among them, Darius the son of Hystaspes, an Achæmenian prince, great-grandson of Teïspes, from whom Cyrus claimed descent. Of Hystaspes, the father of Darius, little is known. His son made him governor of a province. He seems to have been without ambition.

But before these events had come to pass, the returned exiles in Judea were involved in other difficulties.

The Jews of mixed race, who in the absence of instruction had lapsed from the purity of Mosaic Judaism, were at first desirous to fraternize with their brethren from Babylonia. They came to Zerubbabel, to Joshua, and to the heads of families, who formed a kind of council, requesting permission to join in raising the Temple, "for that they too," as they said, "were worshippers of Jehovah." But their offer of assistance was scornfully rejected; and thus began the great schism between orthodox Jews and those whose genealogy had some taint of foreign blood. These, after their rebuff, threw themselves heartily into alliance with the Samaritans.

"Our God is only the God of Judah and of Benjamin," said virtually the chiefs of the returned exiles. This decision was not only contrary to the hopes and predictions of the prophets, — of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, — it was wholly abhorrent to that Divine Teacher who years afterwards sat by the well at Sichem, instructing a woman of Samaria and her townspeople that Jehovah was the "God of all who worshipped Him in spirit and in truth," and who on another occasion made the Good Samaritan's large charity a lesson to the priests and Levites of the Jewish Church in one of His most beautiful parables.

It was not Jesus who would have answered, like his ancestor Zerubbabel, "Ye have nothing to do with us, to build a house for *our* God." [1]

The hostility thus created soon gave birth, not only to external troubles, but to divisions, violence, and heart-burnings.

While contrasting the behavior of Zerubabbel to these "half Jews" with that of Jesus to their posterity we may not forget to do justice to the zeal, statesmanship, and good intentions of the Jewish leaders. Above all things they were desirous to remove from the Jews, whom they were

[1] I do not remember to have seen it observed in this connection that it was one of such "half Jews" — Herod, descended from heathen Edomites — who five hundred years later built the more beautiful Second Temple.

restoring to their own land, any temptation to relapse into idolatry. Thenceforward the teachings of Moses might be overlaid by casuistry, but nothing impaired Jewish monotheism, — nothing ever again detached the Jew from the worship of Jehovah.

The party thrown into opposition by the vexatious treatment given to their proffered offers of assistance by Zerubbabel and the elders, attempted to resist the reconstruction of the Temple by all sorts of intrigues with the Persian satrap and his subordinate officials.

This, the great work in which the band of exiles on setting out from Babylon with music and dancing saw the very object of their return, at first languished, and then ceased, owing partly to the hostility of neighbors, partly to the unfriendliness of the Persian sub-satrap in Samaria, who was no doubt jealous of the powers bestowed upon Zerubbabel, and largely to the extreme poverty of the people, loaded with debt, and in many instances forced to sell their own children into slavery. The people, hungry and landless, grew indifferent and disheartened.

Things went on thus for about nine years, all through the reign of Cambyses, until the second year of Darius Hystaspes. Then, as peace seemed to be restored in the western provinces of the empire, and armies of marauding soldiers marched no longer through the land, Zerubbabel and Joshua took heart, and stirred up the people to recommence the rebuilding of the Temple; but the flame of enthusiasm had burnt out; the people, absorbed in their own cares, had grown indifferent; the poor were busied with attempts to reclaim their wasted fields, and to replant their uprooted vineyards. The rich had built for themselves stately houses, appropriating for that purpose in many instances the material that had been stored for the restoration of the Temple. It seemed necessary to find some way to rekindle religious and patriotic enthusiasm; and the leaders called upon two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to exhort the people. For several months their admonitions and predictions were heard daily in the streets

of Jerusalem. Haggai prophesied the future glories of the uncompleted Temple. Zechariah gave forth a series of apocalyptic visions.

From a purely literary point of view the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah fall short of the magnificent utterances of the prophets who had preceded them; and yet there are passionate and pathetic outbursts in Haggai, while Zechariah amid his visions has passages full of noble counsels to his countrymen.

But when news of fresh activity among the Jews reached the ears of Tatnai, the Persian deputy residing in Samaria, he conceived it his duty to look into the matter, being stimulated to it moreover by the popular feeling around him. He therefore went himself up to Jerusalem, accompanied by his secretary Shethar-bosnai, and some other of his councillors. Having arrived there he demanded by what authority the Temple was being built, remarking that it looked more like a citadel than it did like a house of worship, standing as it did on the summit of a lofty hill, and surrounded by strong walls.

Zerubbabel and Joshua replied that a Temple such as they were building had stood five hundred years on the same spot, until destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; that they were engaged in the work of reconstruction by favor of King Cyrus, who had given them permission, not only by word of mouth, but by writing, and who in addition had by an official document restored to them the sacred vessels carried to Babylon after they had been plundered from the first Temple, that Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed. "Now, therefore," they added, "if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house which is there at Babylon, whether it be that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter."

It seems to have been a Persian custom to place with every high official intrusted with the government of a province or district a man of letters whose duty it was

to maintain correspondence with the king himself, by means of the admirable posts established through the Empire by Darius. This man acted as spy, correspondent, and ambassador;[1] and he proceeded at once to write to King Darius an account of all that was taking place at Jerusalem, the suspicions entertained, the steps to hinder the work that had been taken, and the suggestion of the Jewish leaders that search should be made for the document of Cyrus in the archives of Babylon.

Tatnai did not dare to insist, upon his own responsibility, that the work on the Temple should be suspended until an answer to this communication was received, but Zerubbabel and Joshua, pending the decision of the king, thought it prudent to dismiss their workmen.

The decree of Cyrus was sought among the inscribed bricks stored among royal archives in Babylon, but it was not found there. Some state documents, however, were known to have been copied on papyrus scrolls, and stored in the muniment room of a high tower in the seven-walled city of Ecbatana, one of the three chief royal residences of the Achæmenian kings. There it was found. A copy was sent to Tatnai, with injunctions that he and his people should assist the work, and adding to the favors bestowed upon the Jews by Cyrus an order to supply "for the building of this House of God" money derived from the tribute paid by the lands to the west of the great river Euphrates. Bullocks, rams, and lambs were also to be furnished to the priests for sacrifice when the Temple should be completed, besides wheat, salt, wine, and oil. It was enjoined upon the Jews to offer prayers for the life of the king and of the king's sons; and any one disobeying the king's will, as expressed in this document, was to be treated after the Persian fashion of punishing a traitor, with exemplary cruelty.

When this document was delivered to Zerubbabel and his fellow-builders they rejoiced with great joy, and the work went on rapidly when assured of royal encouragement.

[1] Much like Spanish envoys at the court of Queen Elizabeth in the days of Philip II.

The Temple was completed in the spring of 515 B.C., about seventy years after the destruction of the First Temple. The Feast of Dedication was held with great rejoicing, and so was the Passover that immediately followed. As King Darius furnished the victims, there was no lack of bullocks, rams, and lambs for sacrifice; and heartfelt thanksgivings were offered to the Lord, who had turned the heart of the King of Persia "to strengthen their hands in the work of the House of God — the God of Israel."

We need not dwell long on the organization of the Jewish ritual, perfected after the completion of the Temple. The singers in great part conducted the services; then there were the porters, and the *Nethinim*, a class of men devoted from their birth to the service of the Sanctuary. They were for the most part descendants of "the serfs of Solomon," Gibeonites, and men who, having been made prisoners of war, were given to God for menial services in His Temple, — to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water," but who, during many generations of such service, had grown happy in an employment which gave them support, consideration, and ample leisure.

These persons seem to have made up a little world within the courts of the Temple. It was powerful by reason of its official position, but the larger part of its members were very poor. These further increased the ancient order of the *Anavim*, a term employed to designate men poor, pious, and oppressed by their superiors.

From the ranks of the *Anavim* was recruited that body of Jewish Puritans called afterwards the Chasidim.

The *Anavim* are called in the Psalms and in the later prophetical books "the just," "the upright," "the faithful in the land," "the meek," "the followers of the perfect way;" while those who opposed them are "the scorners," "the impious," "the proud," "the transgressors," and "the ungodly," or sometimes "the rich," and "the strong," — words in that connection always to be taken in a sense the reverse of complimentary.

We ourselves may indeed rejoice that out of the poverty

and suffering of these poor men grew a whole world of poetry. The inferior clergy, having no employment outside of the Temple service found frequent causes of complaint against priests of the house of Zadok, who defrauded and oppressed them. But their consolations, more than their complaints, were dwelt on in the Psalms composed at this period, which speak chiefly of their love for God's House, of delight in His worship, of their sense of being fed daily from His hand, and of satisfaction in looking on themselves, poor though they might be, as under the especial protection of the Ruler of Mankind.

A large body of singers, grown too numerous for the service of the Temple, found quarters outside the city, where they lived in humble hamlets, but were not landowners. Hymns could not fail to be born among them, trained as they were to music and to song.

The poems called in the Psalter "Songs of Degrees"[1] were probably composed at this period.

"They are little poems," says M. Renan, "perfect in form, delightful as poetry, having a religious charm which has made them dear to the hearts of the pious in all ages. They were sung either in chorus or responsively in alternate verses, which may account for their repetitions, the employment of the same words, the crossing and recrossing of certain passages, and the apparent transposition of parts of phrases, all of which things have been observed. The poverty-stricken artists who created such gems of language and of feeling may surely be accounted the equals of those world-famous Greek poets who, at about the same period, were composing the lyric treasures of Dorian verse, — the masterpieces of their nation's genius in poetry."

After the visit of Tatnai and his party to Jerusalem we hear nothing further of Zerubbabel. If he retained the official rank that Cyrus had bestowed on him, he seems, after the first year or two, to have exercised very little

[1] Psalms sung by priests and singers stationed on the steps which led from the court in which stood the Altar of Sacrifice to the Sanctuary.

authority. We find Zerubbabel always mentioned by Haggai in connection with Joshua the high-priest, and in a way that seems to acknowledge him to be the superior. The prophet in his last utterances seems to announce that in the midst of the overthrow of empires the royal line of David shall pass safely through the flood; in token of which God has set upon the finger of Zerubbabel His signet ring, denoting that he is precious to Himself. Jeremiah had prophesied that a branch should spring out of the root of Jesse, and this was popularly interpreted at this period to mean Zerubbabel. Men expected that he would be the Saviour of Israel, would raise her from the dust, and make her conquer the world.

Yet suddenly the name of Zerubbabel fades out of the page of history. We know nothing of his fate. He, the hope of Israel at one period of his life, passes silently into oblivion. It is possible that the Persians grew jealous of the hopes his nation fixed on him. Josephus seems to think that he was sent on an embassy to Babylon together with three other Jews of distinction, — one of them named Mordecai. Could Zerubbabel have been detained in Babylonia and not suffered to return? Could Mordecai be the same Mordecai we find in the next reign at Susa, the royal city, in attendance on the Persian king? We know nothing; all is mystery that relates to the Prince of Judah's fate.

Some think he may have been the victim of a sacerdotal intrigue; that the two parties that subsequently divided the Jewish nation into hostile camps may have been already formed, with Zerubbabel and Joshua for their leaders. We know that before long aristocrats among the priests (among them the grandson of Joshua) fraternized with the inhabitants of the land and made alliances with them, while the more pious party (probably that of Zerubbabel) repudiated and condemned their proceedings.

If the joint sovereignty of prince and pontiff was found impracticable, it was necessarily the prince who had to give way, as the high-priest was indispensable. But whether

this revolution was effected by violence, by intrigue, or by mutual consent, we have no means to determine.

It seems possible, from the tenor of a parable that forms part of one of Zechariah's visions, that Joshua was not blameless, though there is evidence in one of the Psalms supposed to have been written by him [1] that he was penitent.

In this vision Joshua the son of Josadak stands before Jehovah clad in filthy garments. Satan, the Adversary, stands near to him. Jehovah will not hear the accusations of Satan, not because Joshua is innocent, but because Jerusalem has been sufficiently stricken. Joshua is like a brand snatched from a great conflagration. Jehovah makes him change his filthy garments for priestly vestments, a solemn charge is given him, and the promise is added that some day in the future the Lord will bring forth His servant the *Branch*.

"It is very difficult," says M. Renan, "for us to comprehend what the prophet evidently did not wish to reveal clearly to his contemporaries."

Zerubbabel had no successor. No other man of his nation took his place as judge or *nasi*. The high-priest in the colony assumed supreme authority. Joshua was mysteriously crowned by Zechariah with a circlet made of gold sent from Babylonia, but we have no distinct account of his elevation. He and his successors were thenceforth accounted by their countrymen to be the real governors of Jerusalem. We have lists of the high-priests from that time forward, [2] as there previously had been lists of Judean kings. The high-priest ruled over the Holy City, and priests became the Jewish aristocracy. Of Joshua and of the son who succeeded him no honorable deed and no unworthy deed has been recorded, although we may suspect that the conduct of the former in relation to the deposition of Zerubbabel was not irreproachable. In the third generation the high-priests of the house of Zadok and their families did little credit to their exalted position.

[1] Psalm cxxxii.

[2] See such a list in Dean Farrar's "The Herods."

They antagonized Ezra and Nehemiah, the reformers, and after them the proportion of estimable high-priests to the unworthy, down to the days of Annas and Caiaphas, was very small.

After the death, suppression, or return into exile of Zerubbabel, the Princes of Judah, who had been rich and honored in Babylonia, seem to have sunk into neglect and obscurity. We hear little more of the house of David for more than four hundred years, until we discern its representatives in the lowly home and work-shop of the carpenter of Nazareth.

CHAPTER III.

EZRA THE REFORMER.

AFTER the Temple was dedicated with great rejoicing in the month of February, 515, and the Great Passover which followed had been observed more fully than any Passover had been since the days of King Josiah, Judea seems to pass out of our sight until 484 B.C. — that is, for thirty-five years. We have no historical account of it, either Scriptural or secular, but we may trace the social decadence of the repatriated colony in the admonitions and exhortations addressed to its people by the prophet Joel. The date affixed to his prophecy in our Bibles is 800 B.C., but it is now the opinion of critics that Joel prophesied, not eight hundred years before Christ, but three hundred and fifty years later, — that is, during this dark period which has been called "the deep sleep of Israel."

Whatever may be the date we should assign to Joel's prophecy, we may at least accept his description of the state of the country at the time he wrote, as applicable to the condition of his people when their religious fervor had subsided, after their great work was accomplished by the completion and dedication of the Temple. The state of things that Joel depicts is corroborated by the subsequent reproaches of the prophet Malachi (397 B.C.) and by brief passages in Nehemiah's memoirs. The country after the overthrow of Zerubbabel was ruled by Persian *pekahs*, who, he tells us, "laid burthens on the people, — yea, even their servants," he adds, "lorded it over the people." The "poor were oppressed;" "justice and judgment were in the hands of robbers."

Nor was oppression the work only of Persian officials

and their immediate followers. The land, laid waste by the march of armies, had been afflicted by bad seasons. Drought parched the fields, the crops had failed, the herds lowed piteously in their withered pastures; and the hostility of surrounding nations was shown by continual raids and plunderings. Jews in these incursions were made captive. Men and women were sold to Syrian slave-dealers, who carried on a brisk slave trade with the Greeks. By reason of the extreme poverty of the people, the daily sacrifices had to be suspended. Victims were no longer furnished by the Persian government, according to the decree of Darius which gave the priests authority to call on the treasurer of the satrapy of Syria for needful supplies. Then too the higher clergy oppressed the Levites, withholding from them their dues; and the poor mortgaged their lands to the rich, who proved pitiless creditors. There was no relapse amongst this afflicted people into idolatry, but religious feeling was benumbed by disappointment and despair. "Why should Jehovah have cast off his people, and have given his heritage to reproach?" "Wherefore should they say among the Gentiles, Where is their God?" were questions that must have been in the hearts if not upon the lips of sufferers through the length and breadth of the land.

But during this dark period in the history of the people to whom our world was to owe light and life, great events were passing in the West, and writers of renown who knew nothing of the Jews were recording what they believed to be the most important facts in the world's history.

The reign of Darius Hystaspes was troubled for six years by revolts in his provinces. The leaders of each rebellion, when it was put down, were mercilessly treated. In an inscription where Darius has recorded his own glorious deeds we read: "When Ormazd saw this earth filled with revolt and civil war, then did he intrust it to me. He made me king, and I am king. By the grace of Ormazd I have restored the earth. What I ordered was done, since it was my will. If thou thinkest how numerous

were the lands over which King Darius ruled, look on the images of those who bear my throne and thou wilt recognize them. Thou wilt then know that the spear of the Persian reached afar. Thou wilt then know that the Persian hath fought in battle far from his Persian land."

On the great Rock of Behistun there is also a procession of ten prisoners, the pretenders who disputed sovereignty with the great king. Over the head of each is his name, and the name of the country of which he pretended to be king, with the brief words in addition: "And he lied."

But civil war made a small part of the military history of Darius. After firmly seating himself on his throne he employed himself for seven years (513–508 B.C.) in regulating the internal affairs of his vast empire. He had three capitals, Babylon, Susa, and Ecbatana, in each of which he passed a portion of the year. Persepolis, the ancient capital of Persia, he also adorned with sculptures of great beauty.[1] But after this period of his reign, in which he diligently pursued the arts of peace, he was seized by the fever of imperial expansion, and engaged in a series of foreign wars which brought about the ruin of his empire.

He resolved to make the Black Sea a Persian lake. Along its southern, or Asiatic shores, he already possessed all lands, but he wanted to add those upon the west and north to his dominions. There lived the Thracians and the Scythians, or Skolotti, as they called themselves. Among the sculptures at Persepolis is one that represents the Scythians in garments exactly resembling those worn at the present day by Russian *moujiks*. The Scythians had long maintained that their country never could be conquered, because no invader could penetrate their forests, or resist "feathers in the air" (the snow-flakes of their winters).

With a vast army, and attended by a fleet, Darius crossed

[1] Within a few years Persepolis has been the scene of the archæological labors of a Frenchman, M. Dieulafoy, and of his wife, whose book recording their achievements is profoundly interesting and contains the most beautiful illustrations.

the Bosphorus. With part of his forces he invaded Thrace and reached the Danube. With the rest, under his own command, he attempted to subdue the Scythians. We know little of the campaign, though a great deal is said of it by Herodotus. The Scythians avoided a pitched battle, but, skirmishing, led the Persian army ever further and further into the interior. At last Darius found himself obliged to retreat, with barbarian hordes hanging on his rear. News from the Greek cities on the coast of Asia Minor probably hastened his return. The Athenians, alarmed by the appearance of a Persian army in Thrace, had endeavored to create a diversion. They sent Miltiades to Asia Minor to rouse the spirit of the Greek cities long established there. Miltiades had small success in Miletus, the principal Greek city of Ionia. Its chief men told him that they were indebted to Darius for many favors, and for their municipal liberty; but the seeds of discontent and disaffection were sown, and (B.C. 500) five years later, the Greek cities of Ionia all broke into revolt against the monarch of Persia. The Athenians, who had inspired this revolt, assisted it. Darius suppressed the insurrection, and took due vengeance on the rebellious cities, especially Miletus. Exasperated by the conduct of the Athenians, he sent a large army and a fleet against them. The army was defeated, and the fleet dispersed in a great storm, when rounding the Thracian promontory of Mount Athos. A second expedition against Greece was still more unfortunate. His large army was totally routed at Marathon. The struggle between the civilization of the West and the orientalism of the East, begun in the heroic age at the siege of Troy, once more resulted in the triumph of Europe over Asia. Darius was making immense preparations to raise an army whose numbers Greece would be unable to resist, and he intended to take the field in person, when Egypt revolted, and part of his army was sent thither to restore order; that task being accomplished, it marched into Cyrene, and pushing on threatened Carthage. The Carthaginians, who a few years before had made their first

treaty with Rome (508 B.C.), concluded a similar alliance with the King of Persia. But Darius, now an old man, was sinking under the weight of cares and troubles; he died in 485 B.C. leaving his throne and the prosecution of his projects to his son Xerxes.

All this is Grecian history. The Jews, living in an obscure province, took at that time little or no part in the world's affairs; but I think it is always interesting to trace the great world's progress side by side with the history of the nation whose fate and fortunes are most closely connected with our own.

In the reign of Darius Hystaspes and in the subsequent reign of his son Xerxes (521–465 B.C.) lived Miltiades, Cimon, Aristides, Themistocles, Leonidas, and Pericles. During this period of Jewish history the fight at Thermopylæ took place, and the battles of Marathon and Salamis. Pindar, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Herodotus, Thucydides, Anaxagoras, and Socrates were living,—though all had not attained their fame; and the battle of the Lake Regillus was fought by Rome against the settlers in Magna Græcia. These great writers and these great events were of no concern to the Jews, though they powerfully affected the history of the world.

Xerxes (who is now held to be the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther) continued the preparations begun by his father for a war against Greece. With this in view he held a great feast in his summer capital of Susa (Shushan) to which he summoned all the leading men in Persia, ostensibly to ask them for advice, but in reality to constrain them to assist his plans with men and money. It was at this feast, when excited by wine, that he committed his memorable breach of Persian propriety, by summoning Vashti to present herself to his riotous and half-drunken company.

We all know the story of Esther. During the delay that occurred between the event which displaced Vashti and admitted Esther to supremacy in the *harem*, the expedition that the king led into Greece kept him away from Susa.

Haman, the son of Hammedatha, was probably a Persian, named Amana. His father's name is Persian, and possibly when he is called "the Agagite" it may refer to the city of his birth, Agbatana.

The great difficulty, however, regarding the book of Esther is that Herodotus tells us that the legitimate queen of Xerxes was his cousin, the princess Amestris, who completely ruled him.[1] She was intensely jealous of her rank and not disposed to forgive the conjugal infidelities of her voluptuous husband.

Possibly Vashti and Esther were secondary wives, who were invested with exceptional authority when out of reach of Amestris in the harem of Susa. Xerxes had been nearly twenty years married to Amestris when he returned from his Grecian campaign. About six years later he was murdered in his palace by conspirators instigated, it is thought, by Amestris, who felt herself outraged by the life he was leading.

In Babylon of late years numerous omen-tablets have been unearthed, and are now in the British Museum; with these, purim, or lots, were cast to determine lucky or unlucky days. The process of casting lots was prolonged in Haman's case a year. When he had ascertained what day would be fortunate for the destruction of the Jews, and had ascertained by magic that it would be the last day of February, B. C. 473, he opened the subject to the king, offering him a bribe of 10,000 silver talents (eleven millions of dollars) for an edict ordering the Jews to be put to death throughout the empire, — partly because they had different laws from those of other peoples, and partly because they did not keep the king's laws. The money was of course to be raised by confiscation of their property, and the expenses of the war with Greece had made Xerxes most desirous to replenish his treasury. It was a tempting bribe when offered to a king in difficulties. We know how

[1] By Persian law there were only seven Persian houses from which (outside the royal family) it was permissible for the king to take his legitimate queen. — Prof. A. H. SAYCE.

it all ended. The Feast of Purim was established among the Jews, and has been kept up to the present day.

Mordecai, if he was made vizier in the place of Haman, probably held his office only a short time. At any rate he did nothing for his countrymen, either in Babylonia or Jerusalem, except to save their lives. We all know that the name of God is not mentioned in the book of Esther, neither is there any allusion in it to the Temple or to Jerusalem. The Jews of Alexandria afterwards interpolated a number of passages in the book, which gave it a more religious character, but they detract from the beauty of the narrative. Saint Jerome, in his translation (called the Vulgate), restored these interpolated passages, but in unchronological order. We have them printed by themselves in the Apocrypha.

Meantime many priestly families and heads of houses, who composed a sort of council in Jerusalem, felt compelled to take a new and decisive step to avert, as it seemed to them, the loss of all that had been gained by the Return. There seemed indeed but one way open which would at once placate the Persian officials in Samaria, propitiate their hostile neighbors, and bring a fresh infusion of wealth into the community.

Women were scarce in Judea, especially women of the upper classes; it was resolved to make alliances with the daughters of great and rich men of alien races. Their forefathers had never wholly approved the stern attitude taken by Zerubbabel against these people, who were not idolaters, but imperfectly instructed worshippers of Jehovah, men who had been willing and anxious to offer their means and their help to build the Temple, and were almost ready to crouch for recognition by the ecclesiastical party at Jerusalem. The Zadokites, in their turn, were not unwilling, when occasion served, to convert their social influence into political power. They looked upon the policy which had provoked the enmity of the people of the land as a mistake. The colony had never been left in peace, and had never prospered since such unrighteous exclusiveness had been main-

tained. The party opposed to Zerubbabel's policy was after sixty years disposed to offer to the Gentiles the fellowship formerly denied them. It was the priests and rulers who led the movement, and were the first to take what the reformers called "strange wives."

The new policy was acceptable to the majority of the people, but a considerable minority formed an opposition, maintaining that the prohibition addressed to Israel at the time of the conquest of the land, which forbade men to espouse daughters of the heathen Canaanites, was in force for all time, even when the women and their families had ceased to be idolaters, and had become worshippers of the same God as the Jews.

On the other hand, those who, with the sanction of the chief priests and elders, had taken Gentile women to be their wives, could point to numerous such alliances which had met with divine approval. Abraham's second marriage, to say nothing of his union with Hagar, was a case in point. Joseph had married an Egyptian woman, and Moses a Midianite. David's great-grandmother was Ruth the Moabitess, the sweetest female character in Old Testament history; he had himself among his numerous wives several of foreign lineage. And lastly, one of the most glowing and triumphant Psalms celebrated the union of King Solomon with an Egyptian princess. This marriage proved unfortunate, but there is no record that it was opposed on religious grounds at the time. The prophets had gloried in the prospect that all the nations of the earth should join themselves to Israel, and that Jehovah's Temple should be called a House of Prayer for all people. Was the spirit of exclusiveness to block the fulfilment of such prophecies, and make eternal the bitter enmity of Gentile races who dwelt within sight of Mount Moriah and the gleam of its glittering Temple?

It may be doubted if the common people of Judea were familiar with the Law. They seem to have had no schools for instruction, and only the chief men were acquainted with Hebrew, the language of Scripture. The word "Torah,"

which we have translated "the Law," does not mean a strict code of commandments and prohibitions, but rather it is derived from a word which means "to guide," "to point out the way."

Meanwhile, while in Judea the people were perplexed by questions of worldly policy, interpreted by the most religious men among them to be at variance with the commands of Jehovah, morality had sunk to a low ebb. We may read this in the reproaches addressed to the people by their later prophets, and more especially to the higher classes, who were vehemently accused by Nehemiah of covetousness and oppression.

Reform was imperatively needed; but whence was a reformer to come? Not from among the faithful in Judea; political and ecclesiastical interests would crush him as they had crushed Zerubbabel. Three things would be essential to a reformer's success. He must come from without, not from within the Judean colony; he must be clothed with authority higher than that of the ruling classes at Jerusalem; he must be at once a zealot and a teacher.

Such a man was Ezra, who was being made ready for his work within the walls of Babylon. He had never been in Palestine; he had never seen the Temple. He was of priestly descent, and of the house of Zadok. His ancestor had been the high-priest Seraiah, executed at Riblah by Nebuchadnezzar in 592 B.C. Seraiah had been grandfather to Joshua the son of Josadak. Ezra was consequently a near kinsman of the priests whose authority over their countrymen he was to supersede in Jerusalem. He was descended from that Hilkiah who in the reign of Josiah had discovered a copy of the lost Book of the Covenant, the book of Deuteronomy, in a chest in an out-house of the Temple, when searching for hidden treasure that might be employed in repairing ravages made among the gold and silver vessels used in divine service, by foreign plunderers and a wicked king. No doubt this copy of the Law had been carefully preserved by the descendants of Hilkiah,

and Ezra "the scribe, the priest of the God of heaven," as he was described by his Babylonian sovereign, made it his earnest study. He became an enthusiast for the Law. To transcribe it, to meditate on it, and to impart instruction from it, became the business of his life. He was an enthusiast by temperament. The precious Roll was not only the word of Jehovah as revealed to Moses, but its preservation was connected with the history of his family. In Babylon he could exercise no priestly functions, but he became a scribe, and of that order among the scribes called a *sopher*, or teacher.

The Babylonian Jews, having no Temple, supplied the place of its services by listening to the exhortations of the prophets, by strictly keeping the Sabbaths and the Holy Feasts, by attention to the rules of diet, by avoidance of Gentile marriages, keeping themselves by every means in their power a separate people. When the prophets ceased to preach they fell back on uninspired teachers. It is doubtful if they had synagogues. These seem to have been first established a century after this time in Alexandria. For sacrifice they substituted prayer and obedience to the Law, with which their teachers made them well acquainted. There were apparently schools for the training of such teachers. Among them Ezra became a leading spirit, and his heart was saddened by accounts that reached Babylon from time to time of the degeneracy and general wretchedness of the colony at Jerusalem.

He must have been a full-grown man when the decree of massacre went forth from Xerxes against the Jews, and have shared in all the emotions it excited among his countrymen. He earnestly desired to become a missionary to his own backsliding people, and while waiting until the Lord should open the way for the fulfilment of this wish, he appears to have gathered round him a band of disciples into whom he infused his own spirit.

In the seventh year of Artaxerxes this opportunity came. Only in Jerusalem could Ezra hope to realize his ideal of the Law, the whole Law, and nothing but the Law, and he

earnestly sought, and no doubt prayed, for the opportunity to put his dreams into execution.

In 465 B.C. (one hundred and twenty-eight years after the return under Zerubbabel) Xerxes (or Ahasuerus) was slain by a conspiracy in his palace at Susa, and after a period of disorder, murder, and massacre, his youngest son, Artaxerxes Longimanus (he of the long hand) succeeded him.

Artaxerxes was a prince of extraordinary beauty of person, though some defect in his hands may have given him his *sobriquet.* He was disinclined to war or bloodshed; was kindly, approachable, and easily influenced by those about him. He had been long a resident in Babylon, where very probably he may have been brought into some connection with the Jewish *sopher* who stood high in the estimation of his countrymen. He may have had Jews too in his court, even before Nehemiah held office there. His queen, Darinaspia, may have looked favorably on the Jews, as other royal ladies in imperial or royal houses did in after years.

As long as Xerxes reigned, the Jews in Jerusalem believed that it was hopeless to induce the Persian court to better their condition. Their safety lay in being quite forgotten. But his murder, after a reign of twenty years, brought hope and change. They resolved to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The Persian authorities in Samaria took the alarm, and Rehum, the official correspondent of the king, wrote a letter, in the Aramaic language as spoken in Syria, to Artaxerxes, pointing out that the city whose walls the returned exiles were beginning to rebuild, had ever been a rebellious and a bad city. If its walls were set up, its inhabitants might refuse to pay tribute or taxes, which would impair the revenues of the local government. Artaxerxes was advised to search the records, and assure himself that Jerusalem had always been an unruly city, and hurtful unto kings and princes.

This letter was answered by a decree from the new king that the rebuilding of the walls should be stopped. Meantime troubles in Egypt seemed to require the presence of

the Persian armies. This revolt had been fostered and assisted by the Athenians. For political reasons Artaxerxes and his councillors decided to strengthen the feeble colony which had been set up by Cyrus, and patronized by Darius. The king thought if he issued a proclamation authorizing all the Jews throughout his empire to return to their own land, the response would be general. Ezra, it is probable, he knew already, and respected. He sent for him and learned his views. The result was that he acknowledged Ezra as an especial teacher of the Law of his God in Judea, and he gave him authority to go to Judea with the Law of his God in his hand, to make it the law of the land, to govern the country according to that Law, to set up judges and magistrates who would enforce it, and to establish schools and teachers in towns and rural districts throughout Judea. Besides this, the king sought to propitiate the inhabitants of Jerusalem (and possibly the God they worshipped) by gifts of immense value to the Temple. The treasurers of the Syrian satrapy were enjoined to furnish speedily whatever Ezra, the scribe, the priest of the God of heaven, should require, to the extent of one hundred talents of silver (more than one million dollars), and wheat, oil, wine, and salt in proportion. To this order was added the remarkable words: " and whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven; for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?" Besides this, the priests, Levites, and singers engaged in the service of the Temple were exempted from all tribute and taxation.

As leader of this second Return, Artaxerxes chose Ezra, who he was confident would be faithful to him in all things, and who he found had already arranged a plan for settling the affairs of Judea. The king also persuaded his council, and the rich Babylonians, Jewish and Gentile, to assist his purpose of raising Judea and its inhabitants from the decay into which they had fallen, by subscribing immense sums to put the affairs of the colony on a basis of financial prosperity.

Well might Ezra have felt anxious concerning the safety of this treasure while conveying it across the great desert between the Euphrates and Cœle-Syria, but he declined a Persian escort, being ashamed, he tells us, to "require of the king an escort of soldiers and horsemen," for he had told him that "the hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek Him, but His power and His wrath is against all them that forsake Him." All this must have further strengthened the good opinion of Artaxerxes, and have been a proof of Ezra's sincere and practical reliance on the care and protection of his God.

When the troop of pilgrims assembled at the trysting-place, it was found that the expectations of Artaxerxes had been by no means realized, and even from the number that presented themselves some families were weeded out by the careful hand of Ezra, who, looking on this Return as a missionary enterprise, was resolved to take with him no followers except such as could bring with them clear records of untainted Jewish blood.

If Artaxerxes had reason to be disappointed in the numbers attracted by his generosity (there were only 1600 fighting-men among them), Ezra was mortified to find so few priests, and absolutely no Levites. He halted for three days, and sent a deputation to Casaiphia, which seems to have been a suburb of Babylon containing a college of Levites, who were receiving instruction in the Torah under a president whose name was Iddo. The commissioners succeeded in bringing back thirty-eight Levites, among them a teacher of some authority among his countrymen, and two hundred and twenty Nethinim, who were more ready to return to their service in the Temple than their superiors.

A fast was then held to entreat the protection of Jehovah on their dangerous journey, after which they set forth, about six thousand souls.

The way was long; they hardly made more than eight miles a day, and Ezra had to make many détours to deliver his credentials and the king's letters of instruc-

tion to Syrian *pekahs* and treasurers in provinces and cities.[1]

At last they reached Jerusalem, and Ezra for the first months of his stay became the guest of his kinsman Johanan, the high-priest's son. Apparently Johanan tried to keep from him a full knowledge of the state of affairs.

Ezra had obtained from the Persian rulers precisely the powers he could have wished; most probably he himself dictated them. He came to Judea with authority to administer the Law as contained in the Mosaic code — "the law of his God that was in his hand;" and as he had no hesitation in interpreting that law after the strictest fashion, he found himself with power to regulate the whole life of the colony, domestic, civil, social, and ecclesiastical; and with authority to punish those who resisted him with confiscation of goods, outlawry, and even death.

Zealous and impetuous as he was by nature, he however took some time to look about him. His authority was not rejected by the rulers, civil and clerical, who for many years had governed Judea. He proclaimed a feast a week after his arrival, and made sacrifices for sin, and thank-offerings in such abundance that the like had not been seen since the great days of rejoicing under Josiah.

Ezra had taken care, in his order of march upon the journey (when the people were divided into twelve bands, each under a leader), to put forward on every occasion his fixed idea that the returned exiles were to be considered as representing *all Israel.* They were not the remnant of two tribes restored to their native country, but the Jewish people, — the chosen of God, — the inheritors of His promises. The wealth Ezra had brought with him, the hopes of court favor that his arrival kindled, and his apparent moderation in the first months of his rule, notwithstanding the despotic

[1] May I be excused for rambling out of the path of history, and pointing out that Ezra vii. 21, which contains part of the instructions sent to the treasurers "beyond the river," has in it all the letters of the alphabet, except *j* — for which *i* in old times was the equivalent.

powers with which he was invested, caused him to be peaceably accepted as the chief director of Jewish affairs. Meantime the adherents who had come with him from Babylon were doing missionary work among their countrymen, and stirring up opposition to the aristocratic party. It was, however, not until he had been some months in Jerusalem that he was made fully aware of the extent to which the policy of mixed marriages had, as he conceived, corrupted the nation.

Then, on a day of especial solemnity, he was waited on in the Temple by a deputation from the party faithful to old traditions. Their report overwhelmed him. He tore his clothes, plucked out his beard and hair, and sank down upon the pavement, probably in an epileptic fit, in which he lay until the hour of evening sacrifice, with his adherents standing round him. Then he rose, and going into the outer court, where he could be seen by all the people, he fell upon his knees, stretched forth his hands, and poured out his soul in prayer with a fervency that moved the hearts of those who heard him. As he paused, a voice in the crowd cried: "We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land; yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law." Then, turning to Ezra, he added: "Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee; we also will be with thee. Be of good courage and do it!" The voice was that of Shechaniah, who may have been inspired for family reasons with a detestation of foreign wives; for both himself and his father, Jehiel, were among the offenders.

Moses had indeed commanded his people not to make marriages with Canaanite idolaters, but neither by precept nor example did he set his face against marriage with true converts to the Jewish faith, although of foreign lineage. Neither is there any word of his that would command or

justify the breaking of the marriage tie for such a cause, or putting away children born of such a marriage.

As this is a subject involving Jewish feeling, it may be best to quote here what is said by Graetz in his "History of the Jews": —

"When Shechaniah had spoken, Ezra seized on the idea at once; he rose and demanded that the heads of families who were present on this occasion should swear before the Sanctuary and by their God that they would repudiate their foreign wives and their children. That moment was to decide the fate of the Judean people. Ezra, and those who thought as he did, raised a wall of separation between the Judeans and the rest of the world. But this exclusiveness was not strictly in agreement with the letter of the Law, for Ezra himself, with all his knowledge, was not able to point out any passage in the Torah implying that mixed marriages were forbidden when contracted with those who acknowledged the God of Israel. Such members of the community as in a moment of enthusiasm had taken this vow were now obliged to keep it. With bleeding hearts they separated themselves from their wives, the daughters of neighboring tribes, and repudiated their own children. The sons and relations of the high-priest were forced to set an example to the rest."

The party of Ezra formed from its most ardent members a kind of senate, and sent forth a proclamation commanding all Jews throughout the land who had been guilty of contracting mixed marriages to repair at once to Jerusalem, where a court of inquiry into the matter was to be held; the judges being appointed and presided over by Ezra.

Bitterly was this action resented by the people and the chiefs of neighboring nations. Not only did their hearts burn within them at the wrongs suffered by the repudiated wives and fatherless children, but they saw in it their own separation from the Sanctuary at Jerusalem, to which they had belonged. Two men of great influence and wealth felt the wrong done them most strongly, — Sanballat, a Samaritan, to whom had been committed Persian authority in

Samaria, and Tobijah the Ammonite. Both were connected by marriage with several Jewish families; both had accepted Judean teaching. Their hatred, thus provoked, was bitter and enduring. So long as they lived their enmity was kept alive. For a few years indeed it slumbered, but meantime they attacked Jerusalem, tore down the unfinished wall, and burnt the gates, defying the mandate of the Persian king; for the satrap of Syria, their official superior, was in open and apparently successful revolt. The party opposed to reform took courage. Ezra was set aside. All things in Jerusalem fell again into confusion; many of its inhabitants quitted it,—many took back their repudiated wives. Even the Temple services were irregularly performed. What became of the wealth Artaxerxes had intrusted to Ezra, we do not know. The community seems to have sunk again into poverty.

"For a short time," says Graetz, "it seemed as if Ezra's great work was frustrated, and as if the life of the commonwealth were endangered. How little was lacking to effect a complete dissolution!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF NEHEMIAH.

BEFORE entering on the story of Nehemiah, it may be well to say a few words respecting the books that in our Bibles bear his name, and that of Ezra.

In the canon of the Jewish Scriptures these books formed but one, under the name of Ezra. It was Origen, in the third century of the Christian era, who divided the roll into two parts, which he called the First and Second Books of Esdras.[1] We have also two apocryphal books of Esdras, the first of which seems to contain some passages dropped from the canonical Book of Ezra. This book is partly compiled from archives and national records, and part of it is the writer's account of his mission from Artaxerxes, and his eight months' work in Jerusalem in the year 458 B.C. The personal narrative begins at the twenty-seventh verse of the seventh chapter, and continues, with a few slight breaks, to the close of the tenth chapter.

The book begins by an account of the mission of Zerubbabel, eighty years before that of Ezra. The mission of Zerubbabel was in the reign of Cyrus, that of Ezra in the reign of Artaxerxes. Then follows the Roll of the Congregation, that is, a list of the families who shared in the first Return. This list was an invaluable record to the families whose names appeared in it, as it conferred aristocratic rank in the community. The arrival at Jerusalem of these Children of the Captivity, as they called themselves, is related in the third and part of the fourth chapters. Then there is a lapse in the narrative after verse 6 of chapter iv.

[1] Esdras, it may be well to remember, is the name used by the French for Ezra, and also in other languages derived from Latin. See Sayce, "Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther."

It is resumed after the death of Xerxes (465 B.C.), when the inhabitants of Jerusalem had begun to rebuild the walls of their city, and the surrounding nations stirred up the Persian officials in Samaria to send a remonstrance to the new king, Artaxerxes. The last verse of the chapter has reference to an earlier matter, the suspension of work on the Temple in B.C. 521, which occurred in the second year of Darius Hystaspes. In chapter v. the remonstrance sent to Darius by Tatnai, governor of the provinces west of the Euphrates and by Shethar-boznai his secretary, is transcribed. Also in chapter vi. we have the answer sent by Darius, quoting and reaffirming the decree made by Cyrus in favor of the Jews, and enjoining Tatnai and his associates to let the work of the House of God alone. It also granted privileges to the Jews and provided funds to keep up the daily sacrifices to Jehovah. The next record tells of the completion of the Temple (515) and of its dedication.

For a continuous narrative of what took place fifty years later we must go back to verse seven of the fourth chapter and read to the end.

Chapter vii. contains an account of the mission of Ezra, and a copy of the credentials given him to be shown to all *pekahs* and other Persian officials on his journey through Syria.

Chapter viii. contains another muster-roll of those who accompanied Ezra, a list of the vessels of gold and silver which he brought with him from Babylonia, and a brief account of his journey.

Chapter ix. contains Ezra's prayer after he had fallen on the pavement of the Temple on suddenly hearing a reliable account of the real state of affairs.

Chapter x. tells what he did to remedy that most crying of all evils, in his eyes, the contraction of mixed marriages, together with a list of those in priestly or in princely families who had taken "strange wives." Here the narrative breaks off, and we hear no more of Ezra until, thirteen years later, we find him in official partnership with Nehemiah in the eighth chapter of the book that bears Nehemiah's name.

Thus it will be seen that the book called Ezra in our Bibles is rather *mémoires pour servir* than a continuous narrative.

In the year 446 B.C. Hanani, a pious Jew and a kinsman of Nehemiah, with a party of other Jews, arrived at Susa. Tradition says that Nehemiah met them in the street, and, delighted to hear them conversing in his own language, asked them what they could tell him concerning their countrymen who had returned to Judea under Zerubbabel. Nothing could be more disastrous than their account. The walls of the city, though begun, had been thrown down and were still unbuilt; Ezra had lost his power; the people were "in great affliction and reproach;" Arabs pitched their black tents close to Jerusalem; Sanballat and his allies were all-powerful and triumphant; and priests and laymen alike had taken back their foreign wives.

In the palace at Shushan (the Hebrew name for Susa) Nehemiah was the king's cup-bearer. This office was one coveted by the sons of Persian nobles, as it was part of the office of a cup-bearer to say who could be admitted to an audience with the sovereign; it also gave the man who held it opportunities of personal intercourse with the king.

No doubt when Hanani told his sad story to Nehemiah he did not omit to dwell upon the scoffs and jeers of the nations in the neighborhood of Jerusalem when they passed by its broken walls.

Deeply afflicted, Nehemiah fasted and prayed, commending himself and his people to the care of the God of heaven, and then, having committed their cause into God's hands, he waited patiently and prayerfully until God should make His will known to him. He was apparently not on service in the palace at that moment; he had to wait five months. Then came a day when he served wine to the king, and the kindly Artaxerxes, seeing that his faithful servant looked sad, asked him the cause. With a brief ejaculatory prayer before he answered, Nehemiah told his grief, and at once Artaxerxes heard and granted his peti-

tion that he might be sent to Jerusalem to remedy the deplorable state of affairs among his countrymen.

At once he was appointed Persian *pekah* of Judea, with permission to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and with an order on those who had control of the king's forests to furnish timber for the gates.

At once, with a considerable retinue to support his dignity (for that was a matter Nehemiah never suffered himself to forget), and with an escort of Persian cavalry, he set out for his government. Artaxerxes had made but one condition, namely, that his stay in Jerusalem should not be permanent, but that when he had restored order in his district he should return to his position in the royal household.

When Sanballat and Tobijah heard of his coming they were full of apprehension. Their hearts warned them that trouble was at hand.

Nehemiah reached Jerusalem safely, after what was in those days a rapid journey.

He did not at once explain the object of his mission to the chief men — priests and elders. Nor had he incautiously communicated it to his immediate followers. But on the third night after his arrival he set forth with only two or three attendants to judge for himself of the desolation of Jerusalem. His own account of this adventure is touching in the extreme. I make no apology for reporting it from the Revised Version: —

"So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days. And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem, neither was there any beast with me save the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night by the Valley Gate, even toward the Dragon's Well, and to the Dung Gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall; and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. And the rulers

knew not whither I went or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work. Then said I unto them: Ye see the evil case that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. And I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also of the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for the good work."

The mission of Nehemiah could not fail to be unwelcome to the repudiated proselytes headed by Sanballat and Tobijah, especially as he lost no time in saying to them: "Ye shall have no part, no right, no memorial in Jerusalem."

In return these men took up his challenge, and became open enemies of the Jewish people, though they kept up constant communication with their kinsfolk by marriage among the aristocracy of Jerusalem, endeavoring to injure Nehemiah by throwing suspicion on his fidelity to Artaxerxes, reports which they doubtless hoped would reach Susa and find their way to the ear of the Persian monarch; meantime they discouraged the workmen, who feared that by obeying Nehemiah they might draw on themselves the displeasure of the great king.

Nevertheless, Nehemiah persevered in his work. Difficulties acted on him as a stimulus. The wall was speedily completed. Dreading an attack from the people of the land, led by Sanballat and Tobijah, he caused his workmen to labor with swords at their sides and their spears near at hand. A strict guard was kept up day and night; and Nehemiah himself, accompanied always by a trumpeter, was unceasingly upon the spot in case of sudden alarm.

Discouraged by this unlooked-for energy, Sanballat next tried to entice his enemy into his power. He sent four times messengers to the new *pekah*, inviting him to meet him in conference about thirty miles from Jerusalem, but Nehemiah's only answer was: "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down."

Then Sanballat wrote him a letter. In it he warned him

that it was reported that he had hired prophets to proclaim him king, and that it would be well to hold a friendly conference with neighboring men of influence to determine how best to contradict the slander. This letter likewise Nehemiah treated with contempt, turning to God in his trouble with an ejaculatory prayer.

Shortly after this a false friend was employed to entrap him by revealing a conspiracy against his life and urging him to take refuge in the Sanctuary. But Nehemiah answered: "Should such a man as I flee? And who is there that being as I am would go into the Temple to save his life? I will not go in." By this he meant that being a layman he would outrage law and custom by entering the Holy Place, reserved for priests alone. Soon after this he discovered that Sanballat and Tobijah had hired this false friend to induce him to take a step which would have brought reproach upon him.

As soon as the wall was well under way Nehemiah called an assembly of the chief men in Jerusalem. The subject uppermost in his mind was not that of "mixed marriages," as it was with Ezra, but justice to the Levites, and fair dealing, joined with consideration, in what concerned the poor.

Ezra was by nature an aristocrat, and aristocrats, apart from any other bearings of a question, have always great interest in purity of descent. Nehemiah was a man of the people, *bourgeois* by nature, in spite of his court training at Susa; sometimes I have thought him not unlike Scott's Baillie Nicol Jarvie in his simplicity, his downrightness, his goodness of heart, his talent for business, his self-importance, his solicitude for his own dignity, his little vanities, his want of tact, his unconscious absence of consideration for the feelings of others. He was a rich burgher, with a secret feeling of pity for the poor, a keen sense of the value of wealth, and a slight prejudice in his heart against the aristocratic and exclusive classes in Jerusalem.

The Jewish poor in the surrounding country had in their late days of poverty and distress mortgaged their little

holdings to the rich in order to pay their taxes to the government, to meet the exactions of the Persian *pekah* (or his deputy), or to provide their families with support. As these debts became due, the holders of the mortgaged property would show no mercy. Sometimes the poor man mortgaged the services of his children as well as his little holding of land. Many complaints of cruel usage in this connection reached the ears of Nehemiah. As he had not yet spoken on the crucial question of mixed marriages, he retained some influence over the upper classes. The high-priest, Eliashib, himself had lent his assistance to the building of the wall. And Nehemiah had no difficulty in gathering together an audience of leading men, both lay and clerical. When they met, he thus addressed them: "Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. We (of Babylon), after our ability, have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and would ye even sell your brethren, and should they be resold unto us?" As he paused, they sat conscience-stricken and found nothing to answer him. Then he went on: —

"If that ye do the thing that is not good, ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? And I likewise also, and my brethren and my servants, do lend money and corn on usury. I pray you let us leave off this usury. Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their fields, their vineyards, their olive-yards, and their houses; also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them."

"We will do even as thou sayest," was the reply.

But Nehemiah was not satisfied with a mere promise. Promises had failed before in the days of Ezra. He called upon priests to administer to all present an oath, and shaking out his lap he cried: "So God shake out every man from his house and from his labor that performeth not this promise. Even thus be he shaken out and emptied."

Nehemiah's training at the court of Persia had taught

him the supreme value of truth. There was nothing so hateful in the eyes of a Persian of that day as a lie.[1] The straightforwardness and simplicity of Nehemiah's address is in great contrast to the impassioned and dramatic pleadings of Ezra. Besides this, he was known to be a favorite of the great king at Susa, and his authority was better understood and recognized than that of the man who had come to fill a new office, that of chief-justice or supreme judge.

Besides freeing his creditors with the rest, Nehemiah set an example of generosity and disinterestedness to the great men of the city. He declined to make any of the exactions which were the perquisite and privilege of a Persian *pekah;* and he gave liberally of his own means to assist the needy. It is little wonder that before long he became popular.

When the walls were nearly completed and the gates hung, he was surprised and concerned to find that the Levites who should have kept the gates (and indeed nearly all other Levites) were missing. They had migrated to other parts of the country, where, as for a long time they had received no support from the tithes, they went to earn a living. Thus far the active governor had not concerned himself with the affairs of the Temple, but now he took this matter of tithes and dues into his own hand. He also carefully went over the Roll of the Congregation and examined the credentials of the officiating priests, with the result that he excluded from citizenship six hundred and forty-two persons, and from priestly functions in the Temple three families of the house of Aaron who were unable to produce a satisfactory family record. These were set aside until a prophet should appear with Urim and Thummim, and decide their position.

Up to this time there is no mention of any intercourse

[1] See repeated passages in the great inscription of Darius the son of Hystaspes on the Rock of Behistun; one clause of which reads thus: "Says Darius the king, Thou who shalt be king hereafter, beware of all lying; punish severely the man who lies."

between Nehemiah and Ezra, but thenceforward the former seems to have fallen greatly under the influence of his less active but more highly educated predecessor.

As soon as Jerusalem was properly fortified Nehemiah used both power and persuasion to fill it with inhabitants. He did more, he built small houses at his own expense for the poorer part of the population, whom he drew in from the villages. When we read, in the account of those who worked on the wall, that some came from the goldsmiths' quarter, and some from that of the merchants, it does not give us the idea of an impoverished and depopulated city. Possibly these names were retained from the memory of streets so called in happier times.

Thus the walls were completed and safety secured. Then, as Graetz says, Nehemiah, "having formed the people into a compact body, sought to breathe into this body the living soul of the Law."

Taking advantage of a great festival which brought people from the country into Jerusalem, he commissioned Ezra to assemble them, — not in the Temple, for the movement was apparently not countenanced by the priests, — but in an open space before the West Gate, and there from a pulpit of wood to read to them, from his own copy of the Book of Deuteronomy, a synopsis of the Law. The vernacular language spoken by all Jews both in Palestine and Babylon at this period seems to have been Aramaic. The language of learning, literature, and worship was Hebrew.

"What is termed Chaldee," says Professor Sayce, "is really an Aramean dialect, and the word Syriac employed in the A. V. would be a more accurate description of it. . . . Chaldee, or Aramaic, as we ought to term it, was really spoken by the Aramean tribes of Syria and Mesopotamia, some of whom extended as far south as the frontiers of Babylonia itself." He goes on to say that "as far back as the decay of the Phœnician cities, in the days of the second Assyrian Empire, Aramaic became the language of commerce, the commercial centre having been transferred to Carchemish, the old Hittite capital, on the great high-road

to the East, and commerce passed in a large measure into the hands of Aramean merchants. Their speech became a sort of *lingua franca*, as, since the days of the Venetians, Italian has been in the Levant. Contracts at Nineveh, long before the days of Nebuchadnezzar, had Aramaic dockets attached to them. Like French in modern times, it became the language of diplomacy. And, Aramaic being far easier to learn than Assyrian, there is no wonder that the Jews in their exile adopted it, and that when the Book of the Law was read to the multitude by Ezra it was not understood without a gloss or explanation. . . . This, says Jewish tradition, was the origin of the Targums which undertook to explain the words of the Law by extempore paraphrase."

When Ezra unrolled his book the people all stood up. It must have been to many of them their first introduction to the Word of God; and when he blessed the congregation before he read, all the people said Amen!

The effect of the reading and its interpretation by Levites, who, by translation and exposition, caused it "to be understanded of the people," was very great; especially when that portion was read which denounced fearful penalties on those who disregarded the Law. For the first time the people took the words of the Law of God into their hearts, for the first time they felt it to be an integral part of their existence both as individuals and as a nation, and realized that they themselves were its appointed guardians.

On that day a great change was silently brought about in Israel, — scribes superseded the priests; the priests had never been teachers. Thenceforward the national enthusiasm was not for kings or priests, but for the Law.

No wonder Nehemiah called upon the people, who were weeping over their ignorant neglect of the commandments in the Torah, not to sorrow, but to rejoice, and turn the occasion into one of festivity and mirth.

The reading had produced so much effect that by especial request of the chief laymen it was continued for a week. At the end of that week came the season for the

Feast of Tabernacles. Joyfully the people went into the mountains, cut down boughs, palm-trees, and other branches, and prepared booths in the city in which to dwell during the continuance of the Feast.

Ezra, seeing how much the people were now moved, seized the occasion to urge his favorite reform on Nehemiah. By their joint authority a fast was appointed to mourn for the sin of mixed marriages. When the passage in the Law forbidding alliances with Ammonites and Moabites was read and expounded, the people were greatly affected. Possibly none of them knew that the great-grandmother of David was a Moabitess. There was a general acknowledgment of the sin of which the nation had been guilty, and all present who were involved in it, at once promised to put away their foreign wives.

They also entered into a covenant to live thenceforward in all things obedient to the Law. They would keep the Sabbath, observe the Holy Days, let the land lie fallow on the Sabbatical Year, and remit all debts when that year came round. Each man would give one-third of a shekel each year to the Temple treasury, and would be scrupulous in paying his first fruits and tithes.

Soon after this a popular rejoicing and festival occurred on the occasion of the dedication of the new Wall of Jerusalem. This possibly had been put off until it could receive the approval of Artaxerxes. All inhabitants of Jerusalem (except the priests) marched in procession round the city, one half headed by Nehemiah, the other by Ezra. Each was accompanied by a band of Levites singing psalms, and by musicians. The two processions marched in opposite directions, and met again when they had completed the circuit.

To the wall Nehemiah added a citadel called the Bira, from a Persian word signifying a fortress. It stood upon Mount Zion over against the Temple, and in after years its site was occupied by the Roman Castle of Antonia.

Ezra was made guardian of the Temple, an appointment probably very unacceptable to its priestly inhabitants.

Many reforms were put in operation, and careful, business-like arrangements were made for the poor servitors of the Temple, who in time past had been so cruelly neglected by their superiors.

After accomplishing this work, which had taken him twelve years, Nehemiah appointed deputies in his place as governor, and set out for Susa to resume his place in the royal household. He could hardly have reached Susa before everything that he flattered himself he had left in good order was changed.

Tobijah the Ammonite was connected with the high-priest, Eliashib, who was the grandson of Joshua the son of Josadak. He had married the daughter of one of the leading men in Jerusalem, and his son Johanan (whom Nehemiah calls contemptuously "slave of the Ammonites," though he was probably in their service as a military officer) had also become the husband of a highly connected Jewish lady. The opponents of the Puritans spoke of Tobijah in high terms of praise, and sometimes took a malicious delight in enlarging on his good qualities in the presence of the other party, who considered him the enemy of God. Associated with him was Sanballat the Horonite, a rich man who seems at one time to have been governor of Samaria. One of his daughters married a son of the high-priest, Eliashib. A certain Arah Sheikh named Geshem also assisted Tobijah and Sanballat in working mischief for the Jews.

No sooner had Nehemiah departed (433 B.C.) than these persons began to resume their influence among the higher classes in Jerusalem. Tobijah was invited to the city by his friends and connections, and was not only cordially received by the "best society," but was given lodgings in the Temple itself, where he was assigned one of the chambers generally used to store the offerings, the incense, the furniture, and the utensils needed for the Temple service.

Many persons after this hoped and expected that Tobijah might be appointed *pekah* of Judea in place of Nehemiah, but Artaxerxes was true to his old friend, and Nehemiah

returned, after a further absence of twelve years, to reclaim his authority. His deputies — his brother and Hanani — had been completely set aside, and Ezra had once more vanished into obscurity.

Nehemiah was furiously angry when he beheld what had taken place during his absence. The mere fact of Tobijah being lodged in the Temple displeased him exceedingly. He caused all the intruder's furniture and effects to be flung out of the sacred precincts, the rooms he had occupied purified, and the Temple offerings, the incense, and other things that had been removed for his accommodation, put back again.

Soon Nehemiah found that other irregularities had crept into his jurisdiction. The singers and the Levites had not been regularly paid, nor the stores rightly administered. He therefore organized a board, composed of a priest, a scribe, a Levite, and a layman, to make a proper distribution to the inferior servants of the Temple. But Nehemiah's greatest care was to enforce the observance of the Sabbath. In one of his walks he saw men upon that day treading the winepress, while others brought asses, laden with market produce, through the gates to be sold that day in the markets of Jerusalem. There were also men of Tyre and Sidon who sold fish upon the Sabbath to rich people, who did not hesitate to buy of them. Nehemiah reproached the transgressors vehemently, and put an end to such traffic by ordering the city gates to be closed on Friday at sunset, and not opened again until the Sabbath was over.

Nehemiah, who had certainly come under the influence of Ezra, now took up the matter of mixed marriages. One day he met some children whose fathers had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. Half of these little ones spoke only the dialect of some heathen nation. Nehemiah reviled their fathers vigorously, "cursed some of them, and plucked out their hair,"[1] adjuring the bystanders

[1] An amusing story is told of a sermon preached on this text in old Colonial times, when some very unclerical rectors found their way to Virginia from the mother country. One of these in the heat of pas-

in the name of God to make no alliances in the families of those who were not true children of Israel; and he held up to them as a warning the example of Solomon, led astray by strange wives.

But an evil example in this respect was set the people in the very highest places. Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high-priest, had married a woman of mixed race, and his son Manasseh wedded Nicaso, the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite. Joiada, on the death of his father, became in his turn high-priest. Nehemiah could not displace him, but he drove his son Manasseh from Jerusalem. Manasseh took refuge with his father-in-law in Samaria, carrying with him a copy of the Law. He was subsequently made high-priest of the new Temple which Sanballat and the Samaritans set up on Mount Gerizim.

It is thought that Nehemiah continued in Jerusalem, and died there an old man. His patron Artaxerxes died in 425 B.C., and his death was succeeded by a long series of disturbances in the vast empire which he, for the most part, had ruled in peace. "A prince," says Sayce, "so favorable to the Jewish religion as Artaxerxes I. never again sat upon the throne of Persia. But the work which he had been raised up to do had been accomplished, and the Jewish church was firmly established beyond the reach of court intrigues or of civil strife." His instrument, Nehemiah, is one of the most interesting characters in the Old Testament; he has revealed himself to us so thoroughly. He was a conscientious fanatic, an able man of business, an excellent administrator, a man of ardent piety, with a keen sense of justice and a kind heart. To Nehemiah's methods of government in certain cases M. Renan's words relating to Ezra might be more appropriately applied: "He employed the roughness of a fanatical gendarme to carry out his work of reformation."

sion assaulted members of his vestry, and was threatened with an action for assault and battery. On the following Sunday he preached with great energy a sermon on this episode in the history of Nehemiah, giving out as his text the passage above quoted. See Bishop Meade's "Old Families of Virginia."

We know nothing positively about the latter years of Ezra. Personally unsuccessful as a statesman and reformer, he seems to have retired from public life and devoted himself to the duties of his profession. He did a most important work among his countrymen, whether most for good or most for evil it would be hard to determine. On the one hand, the strict exclusiveness he urged upon the Jewish people kept their nation like a stone fixed in a sure place, an object lesson to the whole earth, as it is to this day, of the promises, the warnings, the dealings of Jehovah with His people. What the Temple was to the Jews, their nation has been to all men. On the other hand, in the centre of Jewish life a stop was put to what prophets had declared to be the nation's mission, — the gathering of the Gentiles to the true worship of God.

Ezra inspired his countrymen with the deepest reverence for their Scriptures, of which from his day they constituted themselves the guardians. He infused into the *Chasidim* such reverence for God's Law, such zeal to obey its commandments, that he laid the foundation for the glorious patriotism, self-devotion, and religious zeal of the days of the Maccabees.

But though Israel never fell again into idolatry, the course of its national life after the death of Judas Maccabæus and his brothers became as full of crime, covetousness, and self-seeking as that of any other Oriental nation. Fervor degenerated into formalism, reverence for the Law caused teachers to "set a hedge about it" of onerous practices and vain traditions. In Ezra's time the first split was made in Jewish national life which set the nation into two hostile camps until the very end. In our Lord's time these parties were called Pharisees and Sadducees; in Ezra's they were Reformers and Zadokites, — "those who trembled at the commands of God" as they called themselves, and the worldly-minded, moved chiefly by self-interest.

After the time of Ezra, the laws regulating religious observance became stricter every day. It was the scribes who

imposed the yoke on their disciples that Jesus said men were unable to bear. The Torah, or the Law of Ceremonies, grew by many additions.

"The ceremonial overshadowed the spiritual side of holiness. The effect of placing ceremonial laws on the same level with moral regulations, had the tendency in course of time to depress the spiritual side of religion by obscuring the fundamental principles of life. It substituted for the high ideals of religion a body of rules which could not command the best affections of the heart. The people eagerly took hold of the concrete side of religion, losing sight of the spiritual." [1]

We have every reason to believe that the tradition is correct which tells us that Ezra devoted the latter years of his life to transcribing the Scriptures and collecting and arranging scattered documents; and we may believe that the preservation of much of the text of the historical portions of the Sacred Volume is, humanly speaking, due to the labors of the great scribe, who was not greatly venerated by his countrymen until after his death, but whom they subsequently regarded as "a second Moses."

It is probable that before Ezra's death the book of prophecy was closed. It is not certain whether any living man was called Malachi. The word *malaki* means "my messenger." The abuses the prophet attacked were those rebuked by Nehemiah, — negligence in the payment of tithes and other priestly dues, marriages which were to be avoided between Jewish men and semi-heathen women, the prevalence of divorce,[2] and the offering in sacrifice of beasts lame or imperfect, such as they would not have dared to offer to their Persian governors.

[1] From a sermon by the Rev. Dr. A. Guttmacher, Rabbi of a Baltimore Hebrew Congregation; reported in the Baltimore *Sunday Herald*, June 12, 1898.

[2] Notwithstanding the recent forced repudiation of wives of foreign origin.

CHAPTER V.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

FROM the close of the administration of Nehemiah, probably about 420 B.C., to the invasion of the Persian Empire by Alexander of Macedon (333 B.C.) there is absolutely no record of events in the history of Judea. This is in strange contrast to the abundance of details furnished us in connection with other centuries of Jewish history.

But during this time tremendous changes were taking place in eastern Europe; the world was making progress with rapid strides. The rivalry of Athens and Sparta, and the short-lived power of Thebes, were preparing the way for the predominance of Philip of Macedon, whose victory at Chæronea, while it forever destroyed the self-government of many turbulent communities, united under one leader the whole power of Greece.

Artaxerxes Longimanus, the friend of Nehemiah, died in 425 B.C. Between his death and the accession of his great-nephew, Artaxerxes Ochus (359 B.C.) there were four Persian kings, two of whom reigned only a few months. One of the predecessors of Artaxerxes Ochus was Artaxerxes Mnemon, so called from his remarkable memory. In his reign occurred the revolt of his brother Cyrus, who was assisted by a body of ten thousand Greek troops under Xenophon, who, after the defeat of Cyrus at the battle of Cunaxa, successfully accomplished their retreat to the Black Sea; but nothing in the reigns of these Persian sovereigns seems to have had any influence on the history of the Jews.

In the time of Artaxerxes III.,—Artaxerxes Ochus,—however, Bagoses, an Egyptian eunuch, was intrusted with



ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

the whole government of the Persian Empire, while the king sank into the luxurious repose of an oriental sovereign. In connection with Bagoses occurred the only incident that breaks through the darkness that settled down on Jewish history for one hundred years.

The high-priest, Eliashib, seems to have lived until 419 B.C., when he was succeeded by his son Joiada. Joiada dying in 383 B.C., left three sons. One was Manasseh, the officiating high-priest in the Temple set up on Mount Gerizim; the two others were Johanan and Joshua. Johanan, being the elder, succeeded his father, but his ambitious brother Joshua, having bribed Bagoses to support his cause, disputed the succession. A bitter quarrel ensued. Joshua attacked his brother as he was officiating in the Temple, and was killed by him in the Sanctuary. Bagoses took up the cause of his *protégé* so far as to make his own profit out of the disgraceful tragedy. For each lamb offered in sacrifice at the daily service in the Temple, the people were required to pay fifty drachmas of expiatory money; and this tax was collected every morning before the first lamb for sacrifice was slain. Bagoses also insisted on his right to set foot in the Holy Place, or Sanctuary, and asked mockingly if he were not as good as the man of priestly birth who had been murdered there. For seven years the tax on lambs was paid from the treasury of the Temple.

Bagoses, the honored and trusted favorite of Artaxerxes III., could never forget that he was an Egyptian. Artaxerxes in the early years of his reign had made an expedition into that country, had ruined her cities, plundered her temples, and insulted in every way her national religion. Nor was this because Artaxerxes was an iconoclast or a monotheist. He and his father had corrupted the purer teaching of Zoroaster, and had introduced two new divinities into Persian worship, Mithra and Ahuramazda, the goddess of love. Their statues he caused to be set up in all temples throughout his empire, and their names to appear in his inscriptions, and he is said to have made

great efforts to force their worship on his subjects in various lands.

Bagoses, in spite of the favors he had received, and the confidence reposed in him, determined to revenge the wrongs of Egypt by poisoning his master and destroying his family, after doing which he tendered the Persian crown to a young man named Codomannus, who was of royal race, but had not been born in the purple. For some years he had supported himself by acting as a royal courier or bearer of the king's despatches; but a deed of valor brought him into prominence, and he was made governor of Armenia. On his elevation to the Persian throne Codomannus took the name of Darius, and was the sovereign who, defeated and dethroned by Alexander, was treacherously murdered by his own guards as he was trying to escape into the hill country of northern India. He ascended the throne of Persia in 336 B.C., and very soon finding that Bagoses had prepared for him a cup of poison, forced the wretch to drink the potion in his presence, and so got rid of him.

Darius Codomannus, at the beginning of his reign, ruled over a vast empire. He was personally brave, and all men who approached him acknowledged his merits. He had from his provinces an enormous annual revenue, besides immense treasures laid up in strongly fortified cities.

When Darius had reigned seventeen years, Greece, under the leadership of Alexander of Macedon, "with the most extraordinary outburst of fervor recorded in history, went to war with the entire East, and in ten years had won a complete victory."[1]

Greek armies penetrated into Central Asia and to India; seeds of sympathy with Greece — germs rather, we may say, of Greek ideas — were scattered throughout Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. They took root and developed rapidly.

[1] When in 1841 English captives after the disaster at Cabul were carried into the mountains north of Afghanistan, they came, to their surprise, upon a column erected to commemorate the arrival at that spot of Alexander's army.

"For once," continues Renan, "the march of mind followed the march of armies. The rude Macedonians, who under the leadership of Alexander accomplished a campaign to be compared only to those of France under the Revolution and the Empire, were assuredly not men of letters, nor great thinkers; but what matter? Ideas travel with men often in a course opposite to that in which it is meant to lead them. A French army thrown into a foreign country to uphold an anti-French policy, takes with it the ideas of France. In past ages a Greek was everywhere a man of enlightenment, as a Frenchman in more modern times is everywhere a liberal. . . . But Greece, with all her progress in free government, philosophy, and art, was weak in her religion. Her philosophers saw that the gods of the vulgar had no existence, and yet her men of highest intellect continued to employ poetry and art in the service of a brilliant idolatry. Nor had the wise men of Greece any sympathy with questions affecting the morality or well-being of the common people. They had none of the burning enthusiasm felt by the prophets of Israel for the good of mankind, and for the glory of the Father of all men. Few Greeks had reached the height to which Alexander himself attained when he said: "God is the Father of all, especially of the best men." The whole world was infected by religious disbelief."[1]

Dr. Arnold has spoken thus of Alexander of Macedon: "Asia beheld with astonishment and awe the uninterrupted progress of a hero the sweep of whose conquests was as wide and as rapid as that of her own barbaric kings, or of the Scythian or Chaldæan hordes, but, far unlike the transient whirlwinds of Asiatic warfare, the advance of the Macedonian leader was no less deliberate than rapid. At every step the Greek power took root, and the language and civilization of Greece were speedily planted from the shores of the Ægean to the banks of the Indus, from the Caspian Sea and the great Hyrcanian plain to the Cataracts of the Nile, — to exist there actually for

[1] *Cf.* Renan, History of the People of Israel.

nearly a thousand years, and in their effects to endure forever."

In the spring of the year 334 B.C. Alexander, with an army of 30,000 foot and 5000 horse, crossed over into Asia and landed without opposition in the dominions of Darius. Five days later, his little army encountered a Persian force, more than three times its own number, on the banks of the Granicus, and gained a complete victory. A year later, Darius, having collected a vast army, variously estimated at from 400,000 to 600,000 men, took the field in person, and was totally routed in the battle of Issus, his military movements being impeded by the disorganized multitude he called an army.

Alexander's plan was to secure the maritime provinces of the Persian Empire before he marched into the interior. He therefore, in the spring of 332, invaded Phœnicia, whose cities and districts tendered him their submission. Tyre, queen of the sea, alone resisted him, being encouraged to do so by ambassadors from Carthage. Alexander was therefore forced to besiege it for seven months. This delay in his march to Egypt irritated him greatly, and when at last he took the city his revenge was terrible. As many Tyrians as could escape by sea fled to Carthage, eight thousand perished by the sword, thirty thousand were sold as slaves, two thousand principal citizens were put to death (by some they were said to have been crucified) ; the city was given up to sack and pillage, and then laid in ashes.

Alexander, when he began his march through Syria, had sent his commands to all the cities of Palestine to acknowledge his authority, and to furnish him provisions for his soldiers. All had submitted to his requisitions except Tyre, Gaza, and Jerusalem. Tyre had received her punishment. Jerusalem and Gaza might expect the same fate. When to Jaddua the high-priest was brought the command issued from the conqueror's camp before Tyre, he had replied that his people had sworn fealty to Darius, and that so long as that monarch was alive, they would not break their oath by yielding obedience and aid to his enemy.

Alexander was greatly incensed. He vowed vengeance against the petty tribe which had refused to obey his mandate, and, as soon as Tyre was destroyed, he resumed his march towards Egypt, encountering no opposition on his way through Palestine.

What followed is told by Josephus, and is recorded in the Talmud, but Bishop Thirlwall, in his "History of Greece," Dean Stanley, in his "History of the Jewish Church," Graetz, in his "History of the Jewish People," and Renan, in his "History of the People of Israel," hold the story to be legendary. Renan passes it over with brief mention; but I will give here what Dean Stanley says of the interview (whether apocryphal or real) between Alexander and Jaddua, the high-priest, within sight of Jerusalem.[1]

"According to Josephus, Alexander had mounted the hills that stand round about Jerusalem, by the Pass of Bethoron, and found himself standing with his friend Parmenio on the eminence called 'the Watch-tower,' but known in earlier days by its Hebrew name of Mizpah. There, before Jerusalem had been conquered from the Jebusites, Samuel had held his assemblies; there, as in a commanding place of oversight, the Chaldean and Persian Viceroys had had their habitations; there, in after days was the Maccabean place of wailing; there Titus had his first view of the Holy City; and there in 332 before the Christian Era, stood, with Parmenio at his side, the Grecian conqueror. Suddenly from Jerusalem, which was full in view, emerged a long procession,—the whole population streamed out, dressed in white; the priestly tribe in their sacerdotal robes, the high-priest, apparently the chief authority in the place, in his blue and gold attire, the turban on his head bearing the golden plate, on which was inscribed the ineffable name of Jehovah. It was Jaddua, the descendant of the indulgent Eliashib, the son of the fratricide Johanan, who, it was said, in his agony of fear at Alexander's approach, had been warned in a dream to take this means of appeasing the conqueror's wrath. 'Who

[1] *Cf.* Stanley's History of the Jewish Church, vol. iii., lecture 47.

are these?' said Alexander to the Samaritan guides who had gained from him a promise that he would destroy the Jewish Temple. 'They are the rebels who deny your authority,' said the men of the rival nation. The procession, which, in full view of the Macedonian host, had to descend Mount Zion, cross a valley, and reascend a steep mountain on its other side, marched on all night in two ranks, preceded by torches, with its band of priestly musicians clashing their cymbals. It was the sunrise of a December morning when they stood before Alexander. To the astonishment of the surrounding Greeks, the king descended from his chariot, and bowed himself before the Jewish leader. None ventured to ask him the meaning of this seeming frenzy, save Parmenio, who said: 'Why should he whom all men worship, worship the high-priest of the Jews?' 'Not him I worship,' replied the king, 'but the God whose high-priest he is. Long ago at Dium in Macedonia I saw in a dream such an one, in such attire as this, who urged me to undertake the conquest of Persia, and told me I should succeed.' Then, hand in hand with the high-priest, and with the priestly tribe running beside his chariot, he entered Jerusalem, and proceeded to the sacred enclosure, where he offered the usual sacrifice, saw with pleasure allusions to his career in the sacred books, granted the Jews the right to be governed by their ancestral laws, promised to befriend the Jewish settlements in Babylonia and Media, and invited any who were so disposed to serve in his army, with permission to observe their sacred customs."

However much of this story may be legend, it is certain that Alexander was, during his after life, the firm friend of the Jews. It is probable that if he paid his devotions to Jehovah in His Temple, he did so only as he had already worshipped Moloch (or Melkath) the local god of Tyre, or as he paid his devotions afterwards (possibly with more sincerity) to Jupiter Ammon in his Temple in Lybia. But there is historical evidence that from that time forth Alexander the Great was held by the Jews in especial honor.

His body was brought some hundred miles from Babylon to Alexandria on a catafalque of extraordinary size and unparalleled magnificence, drawn by sixty-eight mules. He was buried with great pomp in the city he had founded, and the Jews have always venerated his resting-place. The Mohammedans, adopting Jewish tradition, have placed him among their Holy Ones as the saintly possessor of the Two Horns. These horns he assumed upon his bas-reliefs and coins either to intimate the descent he professed to claim from Jupiter Ammon, or, as the horn is the oriental emblem of power and strength, they may have been designed to mark that his rule was paramount both in the West and East. His stately tomb in Alexandria has now become a wretched Mohammedan chapel, "kept" says Dean Stanley, "by an aged crone who watches over the humble shrine called 'The Grave of Iscander of the Two Horns, Founder of Alexandria.'" [1]

It was the glory of Alexander to build great cities. At the time of his death he was engaged in restoring ruined Babylon to its former splendor. To this end he ordered all his army to remove bricks and rubbish from the site of the great Temple of Bel-Merodach, which had been de-

[1] When Vámbéry, the lame Hungarian traveller, made his way through Central Asia in 1864, with a caravan, disguised as a *hadji* returning from Mecca, he found on the western side of the Caspian Sea a massive brick wall erected during the Macedonian invasion. He says, after describing it: "The history of the great Macedonian conqueror is invested by the orientals with the character of a religious myth, and although some of their writers are anxious to distinguish Iskender Zul Karneim (the Two Horned Alexander) from the Greek Alexander, Iskender Roumi, I have yet everywhere found the two personages regarded as one and the same. According to Hizel [a brother *hadji*], the wall had been erected by the genii (djins) at the command of the mighty sovereign Alexander. 'Alexander,' he said, 'was a more pious Mussulman than we are, and therefore all subterranean spirits, whether they would or no, owed him allegiance.' He was about to proceed with the well-known fable of Alexander's descent into the realms of darkness, when he became dumb on seeing I was absorbed in forcibly extracting one of the square red bricks from the structure." (A. Vámbéry, Central Asia.)

stroyed by Artaxerxes Longimanus, a zealous worshipper of Zoroaster. The Jews in his army refused to have anything to do with the reconstruction of an idol's Temple, and incurred severe punishment. Alexander, when the matter was brought before him, forgave the offence and remitted the penalty.

It was his mission to impregnate Hellenism with Judaism, which could not have been done successfully in the priestly city of Jerusalem, but Alexandria and Antioch, by the working of God's providence, were to "prepare the way" for the future spread of the highest development of Judaism throughout the world.

As Alexander passed the place where Antioch on the Orontes was subsequently built, it is said that he had a vision of what a centre of civilization a city erected on so beautiful a site might become.

Along the coast of Palestine he made (or improved) harbors, and restored cities. One of these cities was Joppa, where it had pleased Greek sailors in the Mediterranean to locate the scene of the adventure of Perseus and Andromeda. On another lofty headland rose the tower of Strato, named after some magnate unknown at this day. Another of his reconstructions was the old Canaanitish fortress of Accho, subsequently renamed Ptolemais by one of the Egyptian kings. It is once more Acre, and has played its part in the history of modern times. East of the Jordan, Rabbah, in the country of the Ammonites, became Philadelphia, and two military settlements were made of war-worn Macedonian veterans, Dium and Pella. The former was called after the town in Thrace where Alexander believed himself to have seen the Jewish high-priest in a vision.

But the crowning monument to Alexander's greatness is the flourishing city called after his name, which he built at one of the mouths of the Nile, opposite the Isle of Pharos. His eye there perceived a harbor superior to any in Greece or in Western Asia; and there he built a city "formed," as a Frenchman says who accompanicd Napoleon to Egypt,

"to unite the commerce of Europe, Africa, and the Indies." Alexandria, the "great city of all nations" was founded in 332 B.C in the interval between the battles of Issus and Arbela. "There," says M. Renan, "the East and the West were to fertilize each other." Alexandria was like a hot-bed being prepared for the early growth of Christianity.

No Greek city had at that time possessed an institution where men of learning could consult books, or men of science have the use of a laboratory. Poor students could have found no means of subsistence in other seats of learning. The Museum of Alexandria afforded these advantages; and until the Roman conquest, scientific investigation flourished in that city.

The Jewish race, which was speedily transported in large numbers to Alexandria, showed there at its best. The Jew in Alexandria was freed from the limitations of the Jew in Torah-ridden Jerusalem.

Both the new cities, Antioch and Alexandria became full of men of Jewish race. There Hebraism and Hellenism met face to face, and their struggle for supremacy was a sharp one.

Had Napoleon completed his conquest of Europe and died in the height of his power, his dominions would doubtless have undergone a fate similar to that which befel the mighty empire of Alexander. Each of his marshals would have seized a kingdom and have soon turned their armies against each other, thus destroying the unity of power which had been the dream of both Napoleon and Alexander. The conquests of the latter had been divided by him into satrapies. Their satraps, on his death, made themselves kings with little regard to the feeble regents who in the name of an imbecile and a babe, professed to rule over the federated empire.

Laomedon had Syria and Palestine; the sagacious Ptolemy Soter (more commonly known as Ptolemy Lagus) had Egypt; Antigonus for a time ruled over the Far East; and no government was assigned to Seleucus, who was destined to become the most powerful sovereign of them all.

The Rabbi Raphall in his Post-Biblical History of his people, speaks thus of Ptolemy: —

"Ptolemy was a natural son of Philip, King of Macedon, and as such the brother of Alexander, but was contented to be thought the son of Lagus, and had been treated by Alexander with the more fraternal regard because he never boasted the name of brother. Present in Babylon at the time of Alexander's decease, highly honored by Alexander, and singularly beloved by the troops, he might, at the military council which disposed of the empire, have aspired, with no mean prospect of success, to fill the vacant throne. But his sagacity was too discerning to allow him to provoke a comparison with his gifted brother. . . . His circumspection was rewarded with the secret object of his dearest wishes, — the possession of the wealthy and secure kingdom of Egypt."

Four years after the death of Alexander (319 B.C.), when the whole East was convulsed by struggles between the rival Macedonian generals, Ptolemy invaded Syria, which was feebly defended by Laomedon. He wanted to annex the harbors of Phœnicia and Palestine, and iron mines and forests of timber in the mountains of Libanus. Jerusalem, however, held out against him, her rulers pleading that they had sworn allegiance to Laomedon, who, though defeated and a fugitive, was still living. Ptolemy took advantage of the scruple which forbade the Jews to fight upon the Sabbath, and took the city by surprise. His treatment of the Jews, when he had gained possession of their stronghold, became celebrated for its clemency. He appreciated their strong fidelity to the sovereign they acknowledged, a rare quality in those troublous times. He indeed carried a large part of the population of Jerusalem into captivity, but it was to settle them in his own African dominions. Some he employed to garrison his Egyptian fortresses, some he established in Cyrene; but the greater part he retained to people Alexandria.

When these colonists had sworn allegiance to himself and to his dynasty, Ptolemy granted them a very favorable

charter, which renewed privileges that Alexander had already conferred on the first Jewish settlers in Alexandria. By it they were to enjoy equal privileges with the Macedonians; and they soon found themselves so well off in the new city that they did their best to induce other Jews to avail themselves of the liberality of Ptolemy. Some families of priests followed the stream, though their position in Alexandria was not such as it would have been in Jerusalem.

Distance from Palestine put no stop to the dissensions between the Jews and the Samaritans. The latter were very jealous of the superior favor shown by Macedonian rulers to their rivals, while the dispute between Mount Gerizim and Mount Zion continued to be a fruitful source of enmity.

The Jewish colony in Alexandria prospered greatly. The Jews made good traders and trusty domestics; they were docile and industrious. They soon learned the Greek tongue, and spoke and wrote it correctly. "The regularity of their lives, and the strictness of their morals," says M. Renan, "procured them situations as confidential servants." They made excellent clerks and secretaries, and were found by the government especially useful in the work of administration.

At last, in 301 B.C., the two greatest kingdoms founded by the successors of Alexander, that of the Ptolemies in Egypt, and that of the Seleucidæ in Syria, found themselves firmly established. Palestine fell to the share of Ptolemy, and continued in his family for about one hundred years.

The Jews had no reason to complain of their lot. Their Egyptian sovereigns were in general, like their founder, enlightened and liberal. Ptolemy Philadelphus during his long reign showed especial favor to the Israelites; so likewise did his successor, Ptolemy Euergetes. It was a prosperous time for the Jews, though in the wars that raged between the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucidæ of Syria, their country was frequently trampled under foot by the march of Egyptian or Syrian armies.

About the year 300 B.C. Antioch began to offer almost as many attractions to enterprising Jews as Alexandria. It was the capital of the rival kingdom of Syria. There, as in Alexandria, the Jews found a fit field for their commercial activity, so that they flocked to both cities in crowds. In Judea it was hard to make a living. Agriculture yielded small returns, for though the soil was fertile, the crops were often devastated by the march of armies. There was no commerce, but there were exactions from their own priests and a heavy tribute to be paid to foreigners. Then too the yoke of the Ceremonial Law, as it was enforced in Jerusalem, became daily more oppressive. Judaism therefore firmly planted itself in Antioch, and prepared the way for the day when that city should be the first on all the earth to call the disciples of a faith evolved from Judaism by the name of Christians.

The Far East too, which had been paralyzed almost for a century by the shock it had received from the astounding career of the young Macedonian conqueror, was beginning to arouse itself and to shake off its lethargy. Persia, after a century of submission to the Greeks, threw off their yoke, and founded a new dynasty, — the Arsacidæ. But very many years were yet to pass — years full of wars, rebellions, conquests, and changes of dynasties — before Rome at last gave permanent peace to the Eastern World.

Nevertheless, under Egyptian rule the province of Judea flourished. The authority of the chief-priest was accepted by all classes in Jerusalem; and the high-priests of that period — Onias I., Simeon I., Eleazer, Manasseh, and Onias II. — presided over their nation with credit and dignity.

In Jerusalem, and in the country immediately around the Holy City, Greek influence was weak, but elsewhere in Palestine it was active and strong, — as, for instance, in the maritime cities, and especially in those peopled by Alexander's veterans beyond the Jordan. These expatriated soldiers loved to call the new places of their abode by fa-

miliar names, to the future confusion of ancient and modern geography. Many places in Palestine and Syria took new names to flatter royalty, and to this day some of the Turkish names of Syrian cities are founded upon Greek or Roman nomenclature.

About this time — that is, about 260 B.C. — Galilee, which after the downfall of the kingdom of Israel had seemed lost to Judaism, returned to the national faith; "and that, not according to the Samaritan form, as might have been expected, but according to orthodox worship in Jerusalem; so that that city became the religious capital of a district whose inhabitants, in order to go up to the Temple at the time of the great feasts, had to pass through the hostile country of the Samaritans." [1]

[1] Renan.

CHAPTER VI.

THE JEWS IN ALEXANDRIA.

THE wide scattering of the Jews, after the downfall of the Persian Empire, into all regions where, under Alexander and his successors, civilization and prosperity had spread, is called the Dispora, or the Dispersion. It prepared the way for the preaching of the Apostles. It facilitated the future spread of Christianity. Jews flocked into countries to the north and east of Babylonia, they penetrated into India and China, they colonized the banks of the Caspian and the shores of the Black Sea; but so long as the Temple and its sacrificial services remained the outward and visible rallying-point for their nationality and their religion, the Jews of the East never severed their connection with Jerusalem. So late as the spring of A.D. 70, crowds of pilgrims from the Orient came up to take part in the last Feast of the Passover, and perished by slaughter during the last days of the siege. But devotion to the Holy City was less felt by the Jews of Alexandria. These concerned themselves much less than did their brethren of the East with the Temple at Jerusalem. The visions of the prophets about the worship of Jehovah, wide as the world, a worship "in spirit and in truth" was their ideal. They wanted to make proselytes among their heathen associates. Their system of religion was not that prescribed by Ezra.

Without altogether giving up pilgrimages to Jerusalem, or neglecting to make offerings to the Temple treasury, the Jews of Alexandria, and those who had established themselves in other cities founded by Greek conquerors, gradually relaxed a strict observance of ritual. Without

binding themselves to accept all the additions to the Law made by tradition, they conceived it possible to remain faithful to their religion and their nationality by observing the Law of Moses, without the system of sacrifices. But they felt in their dispersion the need of fellowship and public worship.

About this time (say 200 years before the Christian era) religious clubs and brotherhoods were established among the Greeks and Romans. The Jews of the Dispersion caught up the idea. They had places set apart for prayer, generally in orchards, or on the bank of some water-course. Saint Paul speaks of such a place at Lydda by the water-side, "where prayer was wont to be made."

Soon instruction, beginning with catechetical teaching for the children, was established. After that they had reading and exposition of the Law, and then came the establishment of the synagogue. The open-air places of assemblage were called *proseuchæ*. Sometimes their worship was held in an upper chamber.

In Ezekiel's time the Jews upon the banks of the river Chebar assembled round him in his own house to hear him read the Law of God and deliver his prophecies, but the synagogue system had its birth, not in Babylonia or Judea, but in Egypt, and from it were evolved our Christian churches.

In imitation of the Roman *collegia* and the religious brotherhoods of the Greeks, the synagogue soon became in some sort a Jewish club-house. There the Jews received men of their own faith from distant lands, and there they extended to them the hand of brotherhood. In the synagogue strangers made new acquaintances, and received news of absent friends; for the synagogues corresponded with one another, and exchanged letters of recommendation.

On the Sabbath Day the Law (that is, the first five books of the Old Testament) was read aloud in Hebrew, the reading being done by lay-members of the synagogue in turn. When read in Hebrew, another assistant translated what had been read into the vulgar tongue, — Aramean or Greek as the case might be; after which "the ruler of the

synagogue" called upon some man in the congregation of more authority than the rest, to comment upon the portion of Scripture that had been just read, or in the language of our own day, to preach a sermon. Philo has preserved for us some specimens of the addresses and interpretations of Scripture thus offered in the synagogue of Alexandria. They are for the most part dogmatic and full of bewildering subtleties, but they also show a high standard of good feeling and morality.

Public worship unaccompanied by sacrifices originated in these Alexandrian synagogues; so did our Sunday-schools; so did the church catechizing of Christian children. A man ignorant of his religion was despised among the Jews.

The rule of the Ptolemies in Egypt was more favorable to religious freedom than the subsequent rule of the Roman emperors. Under the Macedonian dynasty in Alexandria, different religious bodies lived happy and unmolested, as is to-day the case under British rule in India.

The Jews in Alexandria soon ceased to converse in either Aramean or Hebrew, although the latter was held to be the language of religion, and was carefully studied by priests and scribes. The people rapidly adopted Greek as their common tongue, and with a knowledge of Greek came also some appreciation of Greek learning and literature. The Pentateuch, or the Five Rolls of Scripture, namely, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy (books that received their present names from the Jews of Alexandria), were the only part of our own Bible at first read in the synagogues, but before long the prophetical books completed the public service.

Everywhere the Jews built synagogues, not poor little buildings like those in which Jesus preached in Galilee, but structures which even in those days of splendid architecture, were, in some cases, almost the wonder of the world. The synagogue in Alexandria, which survived Herod's Temple at Jerusalem, was destroyed by the Romans in the days of Trajan during a passionate outbreak of fury against the Jews.

Those who have left us an account of this synagogue describe it as having been a masterpiece of Egypto-Grecian architecture. Each trade, profession, and corporation occupied its own portion of the synagogue under its own banner, so that every stranger could at once find his place, and associate himself with his fellows. The building was so vast that an especial officer was appointed to give signs, by waving a banner during the service, for the responses of the congregation.

The need of an accepted translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek soon became felt among the Jews of Alexandria. The popular story concerning this translation is entirely rejected by M. Renan, who thinks the Septuagint was merely a collection of rough, impromptu translations made in the synagogue, by men who had no perfect knowledge of the Hebrew language. These men, desirous to present their scriptures to the Greeks in a credible and creditable form, adopted a number of petty modifications to suit the sacred books to the Greek taste.

"Nevertheless," adds M. Renan, "this Alexandrine translation of the Bible is one of the most important events in history. It was the Bible of infant Christianity; it was in one sense the Bible of mankind, for the Latin Bible proceeded from it, and Saint Jerome himself only in part supplied its place. . . . Whosoever translated the Septuagint merits the highest gratitude of humanity. He divined the loftiest truth in history, namely, that Hebrew genius would conquer the whole world through the Greek tongue."

The popular legend of the translation of the Septuagint is false and absurd for the most part, but it need not here be omitted on that account, and I give it in the language of Dean Stanley.[1]

"It was," he says, "believed two centuries after the translation was made, and now, however much the details of the story have been shaken by recent criticism, the main fact is not doubted, that in the reign of the second Ptolemy the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek was undertaken at

[1] Stanley's History of the Jewish Church, vol. iii., lecture 47.

Alexandria. The story took two forms. One was that King Ptolemy Philadelphus, wishing to discover the difference between the Jews and the Samaritans, summoned five translators, three representing the Samaritans, one the Jews, and one assessor. The Samaritans undertook the Pentateuch, the Jew the later books; and Ptolemy approved the Samaritan version. But the story as told by Josephus (and as it may be found in the Babylonian Talmud) and as it was accepted in all good faith in the uncritical middle ages, is that Ptolemy Philadelphus, resolved to enrich his new library by so important a treasure as an intelligible version of the sacred books of so large a portion of his subjects, sent to the high-priest at Jerusalem for translators. Seventy-two were despatched to him, six from each of the Twelve Tribes; or seventy-two as corresponding with the number of the Sanhedrim; or seventy-two possibly in accordance with the mystic number which pervades this and other Eastern tales. A long catalogue existed of the splendid tables, cisterns, and bowls, which Josephus describes as if he had seen them, and which are said to have been sent at this time by Ptolemy as presents to the high-priest, to win his assistance. A local tradition long pointed out the Island of Pharos as the scene of the translators' labors. There it was believed that they pursued their work, withdrawn in that sea-girt fortress from the turmoil of the streets of Alexandria, and with the opportunity of performing every morning their religious ablutions in the sea which washed their threshold, on the shore of which, as late as the second century of our era, Justin Martyr was shown the remains of the seventy (or, according to some, the thirty-six) cells in which the translators had been lodged, and in which (so Alexandrine tradition maintained) each produced by miracle the same inspired version as the rest, without one error or contradiction."

After this, when any important book appeared in Palestine, it reappeared shortly after in a Greek dress in Alexandria.

The Greek version of the Bible had great success. From Egypt it found its way into Syria, and even into Palestine.

It was the Bible of Philo, of Josephus, of Saint Paul, and of the early Christians. The Jews were for a long time justly proud of it, but at length its adoption by Christians as a correct rendering of the Word of God, excited their animosity. What once they had admired, they pronounced to be a perversion of Scripture, and at length, after the Talmudic period set in, Jews gave up the use of the Septuagint, and it seemed to go quite out of their remembrance.[1]

During a century and more of peace in Alexandria, Oriental literature gained much influence over the Greeks. The Jews were favorably regarded by the authorities. In the various quarrels that took place in Syria between the Lagidæ and the Seleucidæ, they took the side of the former, and when any of the Ptolemies gained an advantage over the Syrian kings, the Jews looked on the Egyptian success as a victory in the cause of order and legitimacy.

About one hundred and fifty years before Christ, the Jews of Alexandria, inspired with a spirit of emulation natural in an intelligent people living in an exceptionally intellectual city, began to write Greek in imitation of Greek writers. They had no great knowledge of Greek mythology, but it pleased them to adapt the history of Abraham to the legend of Orpheus. There is a long list of Jewish writers who attempted literature of this kind. Abraham was made to teach astrology to King Pharaoh; Joseph rendered services of the same kind to his patron; the grandest temples of Egypt were built by the sons of Jacob. All the mysteries of Egyptian worship originated with Moses. He invented navigation, architecture, military science, and philosophy, he taught the Egyptians to honor God; he invented hieroglyphics, — and so on.

Some of these fables were written in hexameters and were made into a drama. Jewish writers composed treatises to prove that the Jews had been mentioned with honor by old classical Greek writers, nor did they hesitate to manufacture extracts from ancient Greek authors to back up their assertions.

[1] *Cf.* Renan.

M. Renan, in his "History of the People of Israel," has a chapter on the writings of the Alexandrine Jews at this period, in which they laboriously endeavored to reconcile the Jewish Scriptures with Greek taste and Greek ideas; explaining away many passages of Holy Writ, and treating events therein recorded as symbolical.

Absurd as this may seem, it was the outcome of that glorious idea, which they had derived from the teaching of their prophets, but which the Jewish nation in its own land laid aside after its return from Babylon. I mean the idea that all nations would at last be brought to honor the Jews and to worship Jehovah.

Among the dispersed Jews, therefore, appeared a charitable desire to bring those with whom they associated to participation in the blessings they themselves enjoyed; they looked upon themselves, in the midst of the people among whom they were dispersed, as "dew from the Lord."[1] They asked themselves the question: "Since the God of the Jews is the true God, why should not Judaism be the religion of all men?"

For those who held this view it became a point of honor and humanity to reconcile learned Greeks to the Jewish Scriptures; to soften those points which might seem "to the Greeks foolishness;" to make out if possible a connection between Greek legends and events recorded in the Old Testament.

But in spite of all efforts to reconcile Jewish beliefs with Greek philosophy and mythology, men of learning disliked Judaism. It was not the learned, the rich, and the powerful who two centuries and a half later lent in the Greek cities of Asia a willing ear to the preaching of Saint Paul, but people of the middle classes. Such people, in the days of which I write, were few in number. Society in Greek colonies in the East was for the most part composed of rich men and their slaves. "The world," says M. Renan,

[1] And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for men, nor waiteth for the sons of men. — MICAH v. 7.

"needed that top-dressing of democracy, which, under Roman rule was to fertilize the earth and prepare it for the reception of Christianity."

In order to carry on a Jewish propaganda among pagans, the strict religious observances binding upon Jews had to be simplified. The obligations of the Law as applied to Gentile converts were reduced to what were beginning to be called "the Precepts of Noah," — that is, precepts of natural morality, with the addition of the observance of a few points of the Law such as in the first council of the Christian Church Paul and Barnabas were directed to enforce upon their converts in the cities of Asia.

The position of the Jews in Alexandria in regard to the Gentile world around them was wholly different from that of their brethren in Jerusalem. "The idea of winning over an unbeliever to the Jewish faith by facilitating his admission into fellowship, and mitigating for his sake the rigorous observance of the law, would have seemed monstrous in Judea. In Egypt it made headway in many directions."[1]

[1] Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. v.

CHAPTER VII.

PRIEST AND PUBLICAN.

WE turn now from the Macedonian kingdom set up by the Lagidæ in Egypt to the Macedonian kingdom set up by Seleucus in Asia Minor.

For many years Judea was in much the same position as Bulgaria before the Berlin Congress in 1878. It was a strip of country lying between two rival nations, — their battle-ground, and by turns the prize of the conqueror.

The fluctuations of defeat and success (from 323 to 198 B.C.) between the two rival Macedonian dynasties which divided the Persian Empire of the East between them, may be historically valuable to the student, but to the ordinary reader they are uninteresting and bewildering. The armies of both sides were largely composed of mercenaries, for about this time the Gauls made their appearance in Asia Minor, and were employed by the King of Syria, Antiochus Hierax (or the Hawk). Their hordes, which originally came from what is now France, conquered northern Italy, and burned Rome. A large body of them penetrated through Illyria into Macedonia, devastated what are now the Balkan Provinces, and invaded Greece. Repulsed, however, by the inhabitants of that land, they retreated into Thrace, and there established a kingdom. "But finding that their limits were too narrow, they invaded Asia, where they seized, desolated, and then abandoned entire provinces, laid the richest territories under contribution, and interfered with a high hand in the affairs of Syria. Merciless to their enemies and treacherous to their allies, they often sold their troops to rival powers, easily quitted one service for another, and

in all this infamous traffic of blood, invariably preferred to fight for the highest bidder."[1]

The Gauls were not uniformly successful. On more than one occasion they suffered defeat. Their worst repulse was when they followed the standard of Antiochus the Hawk into Babylonia with the intention of plundering its richest provinces. But the inhabitants were roused to fury. They raised an army of eight thousand Babylonian Jews, and four thousand Macedonian soldiers. The army of Antiochus was utterly routed, the Gauls were dispersed, and Antiochus Hierax sought refuge in Egypt, where he was detained as a captive. He escaped, however, and as he passed through the country of the Arabs he was slain. The Gauls retired into Galatia, where they established themselves, gave their name to the district, and continued to furnish mercenary troops to whosoever would employ them.

In Jewish history of this period two characters stand out in something like high relief, — the high-priest Simon and his grandson. Some account of them both may enable us to follow the course of historical events without having too much to do with the battles, murders, and sudden deaths by parricide and fratricide which after 247 B.C. (the date of the death of Ptolemy Philadelphus) disfigure every page that records the history of the Seleucidæ of Antioch, and the Lagidæ of Alexandria.

The two characters on which I propose to dwell in this chapter, are the high-priest Simon the Just, and his grandson Joseph ben Tobiah, who was made fiscal agent or tax collector for all Cœle-Syria by Ptolemy Euergetes; an office which he held, notwithstanding the deep hatred felt for him by the people he oppressed, for twenty-two years.

Simon the Just was the third high-priest in descent from Jaddua. "He was," says Graetz, "the one high-priest of the house of Joshua the son of Josadak of whom there is anything laudatory to be related, and the one to restore the priesthood to honor."

There is some little confusion about his exact date, but it

[1] Rabbi Morris Raphall, Post-Biblical History of the Jews.

seems now generally conceded by historians that he governed Jerusalem from about 300 B.C. to 270 B.C. The record of his rule was: "He cared for his nation, to save it from falling."

During the rule of the Ptolemies the Jewish people, so far as the foreign government went, were left in peace to be governed by their own high-priest and his council. It was as their chief ruler that the high-priest was charged by the kings of Egypt to collect and pay over the tribute money, and the sum exacted does not seem to have been excessive. But during the wars between Egypt and Syria the condition of Palestine, lying as it did between the two contending nations, was often distressing in the extreme. A great object with both parties was to make slaves, who brought a good price in the slave markets along the shores of the Mediterranean; and thus Western cities were fecundated by Judaism in preparation for the days that were to come.

As history in after days told the Jews far less about Simon the Just than they desired to know, legend was called in to fill the void and satisfy the popular yearning. The red thread tied round the neck of the scape-goat was said every year to grow white when his hand was laid on it. The great Lamp of the Temple in his time never went out, nor did the fire ever die down on the altar. Each year the white-robed figure of an old man appeared to him as on the Day of Atonement he entered the Holy of Holies; and when at last it stood beside him clothed in black, he knew that the hour of his death had come.

He rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem and renovated the Temple. He also busied himself with improvements that might promote the safety and comfort of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The supply of water being insufficient in dry seasons, he caused an immense reservoir to be constructed under the Temple, and by underground passages brought water into it from springs beyond the walls.

He is frequently spoken of as the last member of the Great Synagogue; not that there ever was any such synagogue, but the name was applied to those doctors of the

Law who succeeded Ezra as teachers, transcribers, and expounders of the Law.

Simon was, however, opposed to a too rigid ceremonialism; instances are on record of his interference to prevent an over-zealous adherence to ritualism.

His favorite saying was that the Law, Worship, and Charity were the three pillars on which was founded the religious world.

When he died the presidency of the Council of Seventy did not descend to the high-priest who succeeded him. It was given to his favorite disciple, Antigonus of Socho, the first Jew of distinction who bore a Greek name. But he was far from being a Hellenist, though the Jews say he was the founder of that Oral Law by which in after years the scribes and Pharisees made the Written Law of no effect by a system of traditions. He was the instructor of Zadok, who gave his name to the sect of the Sadducees; and from an admirable saying attributed to him the Sadducees are thought to have deduced their tenet that there were to be no future rewards or punishments. "Be not," he said, "like servants who serve their Lord for the sake of reward, but like servants who serve without thought of reward; and the fear of Heaven be over you."

But the most glowing tribute to the character and priestly dignity of Simon the Just must be sought for in Ecclesiasticus, wherein the Son of Sirach speaks thus of the majesty with which he exercised his priestly functions:

"How was he honored in the midst of his people
    In his coming out of the sanctuary!
He was as the morning-star coming out of a cloud,
    And as the moon at the full:
As the sun shining on the Temple of the Most High,
    And as the rainbow making light in the dark cloud.

. . . .

He was as a fair olive-tree budding with fruit,
    And as a cypress-tree which groweth up to the clouds,
When he put on his robe of honor
    And was clothed with the perfection of glory.

. . . .

He stood compassed by his brethren round about,
As a young cedar in Lebanon.
As palm trees compassing him round about,
Were the sons of Aaron in their glory,
Holding the oblations of the Lord in their hands
Before all the congregation of Israel.
Then, finishing the service of the Altar,
That he might adorn the service of the Most High — the Almighty,
He stretched out his hand to the cup
And poured out the blood of the grape.
He poured out at the foot of the Altar a sweet-smelling savor
Unto the most high King of all.
Then shouted the sons of Aaron
And sounded the silver trumpets,
And made a great noise to be heard
For a remembrance before the Most High.
Then all the people together hasted
And fell down to the earth upon their faces,
To worship the Lord God Almighty,
Imploring the Most High.
The singers also sang praises with their voices,
With a great variety of sounds was made great melody;
And the people besought the Lord Most High
By prayer before Him that is merciful,
Till the solemnity of the Lord was ended
And they had finished His service.
Then he went down and lifted up his hands
Over the whole congregation of the children of Israel,
To give the blessing of the Lord with his lips
And to glorify and rejoice in His name.
And they bowed themselves down to worship a second time
That they might receive a blessing from the Most High."[1]

This is a most beautiful description of public worship in the Temple on the Great Day of Atonement, written evidently by an eye-witness — a contemporary of the high-priest Simon. But the son of Sirach is not often poetical. His book is a book of worldly maxims written in imitation of the ancient books Ecclesiastes and Proverbs. It is addressed to that middle class in the Jewish Church who stood between the Chasidim and the Hellenists. The

[1] Authorized English version of the Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus l.

Hebrew text is lost. A grandson of the author translated it into Greek about 130 B.C., but there is a Syriac version, also translated from the Hebrew, which scholars consider much better than the Greek.

"The wisdom of the son of Sirach," says M. Renan, "is after the pattern of Dr. Franklin's in 'Poor Richard.'" The book contains no spiritual aspirations. Nevertheless, it has been admitted among the canonical books of Scripture by a large part of Christendom. It had immense popularity in the middle ages, and was exalted to be the popular manual of Christian instruction. To this day week-day lessons are read from it in the Daily Service of the Church of England, and in that of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America, though it is placed in the Apocrypha.

"The ideal good man of the Son of Sirach," says M. Renan, "is realized at this day in any rigorous Mussulman village. He is grave in his carriage, careful above all to preserve his respectability, clean in his person, sensitive as to his reputation, visiting none but people as punctilious as himself, paying great attention to his guests, — a man of moderate opinions, and of minute ideas."

Simon the Just left behind him two children, a son Onias, too young to exercise the functions either of a pontiff or a ruler, and a daughter married to one Tobiah, who was of priestly lineage, but who appears to have had some connection by kinship or otherwise with the Samaritans.

Two men, Eleazar and Manasseh, of whom nothing is known in history, officiated as high-priests until, in 250 B.C., Onias II. assumed his legitimate position.

Tobiah and his wife, the daughter of Simon, had a son named Joseph, a clever, bold, ambitious man. The king of Egypt (at this time sovereign of Judea) was Ptolemy Euergetes who had been so much absorbed by schemes of conquest in the Far East, and subsequently by fruitless expeditions into the Soudan, that he showed wonderful indifference to the affairs of provinces that lay nearer home. In Judea he suffered the high-priests, whose duty to their suzerain it was to collect and pay over the tribute money,

to evade such payment for more than twenty years, until the sum due had reached an amount nearly equal to half a million dollars. At length he sent one of his favorite officers to Jerusalem to demand payment of the arrears and to make arrangements for more punctual payments in future; otherwise, Athenion, the envoy, was to threaten that his master would confiscate all the lands in Judea, and send a military colony to occupy the country.

The people were in despair. They vehemently urged Onias to pay the debt, and save them from ruin. But Onias firmly refused to yield. Some accused him of avarice, and said that his money-bags were dearer to him than the welfare of his countrymen; some suspected him of an understanding with the rival of Ptolemy — the Syrian king.

In this emergency the high-priest's nephew, Joseph ben Tobiah, grandson of Simon the Just, succeeded in persuading his uncle to let him go to the court of the Egyptian king, and see what he could do to bring about an accommodation.

He began by making his society very acceptable to Athenion, whom he entertained with great magnificence. Before starting for Egypt he raised large sums from friends or connections in Samaria, with which he procured himself a splendid retinue, and entered Egypt in almost regal state. Ptolemy Euergetes had been prepared by Athenion to see in this magnificent personage a most agreeable and accomplished social companion. Joseph was daily invited to the table of the king. He had Greek tastes, Greek learning, and Greek manners. His social qualities made his society most acceptable to King Ptolemy, whom he so influenced that in some way he contrived to effect a compromise, and to obtain for himself a position of great trust, that of tax-gatherer in Cœle-Syria and Phœnicia, together with the duty of yearly paying over the tribute to the king.

Euergetes gave his new favorite the command of two thousand soldiers to assist him in his work, so that virtually he was soon governor over all the districts comprised in what we now call Palestine.

Joseph exercised his power with great severity. He was particularly hard on the inhabitants of the Greek cities. At Gaza and Scythopolis (or Beth-shean), where he was ill-received, he revenged himself by beheading the principal inhabitants, and confiscating their property. His exactions were so notorious that it was said of him, even in the court of Egypt, "Joseph is stripping the flesh off of Syria, and will leave nothing but the bones."

Ptolemy Euergetes was murdered in 222 B.C. by his son, Ptolemy Philopater (the lover of his father), a name we might suppose to have been given him in irony. He completed the atrocity by murdering his mother and his brother, being no better than other rulers who have governed Egypt until that unhappy country came under the sway of the English in our own day.

Philopater was soon involved in a fierce quarrel with young Antiochus of Syria, known afterwards in history as Antiochus the Great.

In the year 217 B.C. Antiochus with a large army landed on the sea-coast of Palestine, near Gaza. Philopater, who was a sensualist and a debauchee, roused himself from his lethargy, and fought a battle with his rival at Raphia, where he totally routed Antiochus, who was forced to retire to Antioch, and give up such conquests as he had made in Cœle-Syria.

But though Ptolemy thus secured the allegiance of territories that had been rent from him by Antiochus, he lost the hearty loyalty felt for his predecessors by the Jews. Before his return to Egypt he visited Jerusalem. He brought gifts to the Temple, and might have offered sacrifices to Jehovah in its outer courts as other heathen sovereigns had done, but, in spite of all remonstrances, he insisted on entering the Holy of Holies. In vain the high-priest and his assistants assured him that no man entered that sanctuary but the high priest once a year. His curiosity became ungovernable. The city was in commotion. The high-priest fell on his face, and implored the Lord Almighty to prevent the profanation of His Temple. Still

the resolve of Philopater was unalterable. But tradition says that as he was about to enter the Sanctuary "he was shaken like a reed by the wind, and fell speechless to the ground." He was raised by his body-guard and carried into the outer courts, where he recovered, and, full of wrath against the Jews, quitted Jerusalem. But the bond of attachment which had so long united the people of Judea to the Ptolemæan dynasty, was by his rash act rent asunder.

The persecution of the Jews that he is said to have undertaken on his return to Alexandria is recorded only in the Third Book of Maccabees,[1] and it is probably wholly apocryphal, though it is historically certain that he attempted to interfere with the faith and customs of the Alexandrine Jews. He claimed descent from Bacchus (Dionysus), and all who would not worship his divinity and join in Bacchanalian orgies, he accounted as his foes. He died at length a victim to debauchery, and his heir was a mere child, not likely to prove a successful rival to Antiochus the Great, who was now rapidly rising into power.

Antiochus felt that his kingdom of Syria needed for its security and completion Phœnicia, Palestine, and Cœle-Syria, the first of which in the language of the New Testament is called "the coasts of Tyre and Sidon." By a brilliant campaign in 218 B.C., he conquered these countries, but the next year he restored Palestine to Egypt. Fifteen years later he reconquered it, and Judea, which, in spite of its share in many wars and tumults, had been prosperous under the rule of the Ptolemies, passed, not unwillingly (so disgusted were the Jews by the insult Philopater had offered to their Temple), into possession of the Seleucid monarchs of Syria.

Antiochus, when he had gained possession of Jerusalem, showed much favor to its inhabitants. It is said that he embellished the Temple, and enlarged its porches; he also granted to its rulers a privilege that they desired above all

[1] Where the story is told in a manner very graphic and interesting.

things, for he gave his official sanction to their enforcement of the Law of Moses in civil affairs as well as in religion.

Jerusalem had been almost deserted. Antiochus re-peopled it, and set his Jewish prisoners free. It is even said (though this is a matter of doubt) that he gave orders to transport into Lycia and Phrygia two thousand Jewish families from Mesopotamia to form the nucleus of an industrious and loyal population. We know at least that in Saint Paul's time there were many Jews living in those regions.

It was in the later years of Antiochus the Great that a new power began to take part in the affairs of the East, and new names appeared in Jewish history. That power was Rome, which had lately humbled Carthage, and was now resolved that nothing should take place without her permission in countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea.

The name of a great general who at this time was welcomed to the court of Antiochus at Antioch was Hannibal, who had evinced military talents second only to those of Alexander the Great. He had maintained his ground in Italy for fourteen years, but in the year that Ptolemy Philopater died, he was recalled to Africa for the defence of Carthage.

At this time two kings — a second Philip of Macedon and Antiochus the Great — nourished plans for the conquest of all provinces that had once formed part of the Persian Empire. They both despised the Romans as barbarians. Philip's plan was to begin by conquering the possessions of the Ptolemies in Thrace, Caria, and Asia Minor, while his ally Antiochus made himself master of Cœle-Syria and the sea-coast of Palestine.

"Greece had already taught the world," says M. Renan, "what was meant by the word 'liberty,' and had upheld the dignity of man, but in everything that she attempted there was a flaw, — the lack of discipline. Her ancient republics invariably degenerated into nests of anarchy. The boasting and rash folly of irresponsible and self-seeking politi-

cians overpowered the lofty aims, good sense, and strict adherence to morality preached and encouraged by an enlightened few."

Before the war with Carthage terminated, nothing had indicated to the nations in the East the wondrous strength of Rome. The civic power and energy that directed the arms of her legions, made her progress irresistible. "Her Senate," says Renan, "seemed to other nations like some all-powerful divinity, who from afar issued decrees which were executed by mortals with the inflexibility of fate."

The native populations of the East had grown weary of their Macedonian conquerors, who had become orientalized in the course of nearly two hundred years. The conglomeration of Asiatic kingdoms and provinces, with the king of Syria at its head, had no nationality. Greeks and Syrians did not coalesce into one nation like Normans and Saxons in a remote spot of the earth's surface fourteen hundred years afterwards. "But the powerful protectorate that Rome soon established over all countries in the East never concerned itself with their moral, intellectual, or religious unity. What she sought was to establish order. In the lands that she conquered, she respected family worship, and the local gods. She had no desire until a much later period in her history to engage in religious persecution." [1]

Antiochus III. of Syria was not so wise. He saw that the Temples of the East were rich, and that the wealth of private persons was stored up in their treasuries. He was sorely in need of money. To replenish his coffers he plundered the Temple of Baal at Elymas, in the year 187 B.C., and the people of that country slew him.

His son and successor, Seleucus IV., is thought to have planned a similar outrage on the Temple of Jerusalem, and to have intrusted this achievement to Heliodorus, his general. The story, as told in the Second Book of Maccabees, is dismissed by historians as altogether fable, but at any rate it has afforded a splendid subject to great painters. I will

[1] Renan, History of the People of Israel.

give the legend in the words of Dean Stanley, deeming it too picturesque to be omitted.

"In the Temple were laid up treasures, including private deposits, placed within the sacred walls as a bank, for the benefit of widows and orphans. There it was that occurred the scene, portrayed in the liveliest colors in the traditions of the next century, when Heliodorus, the king's treasurer, came with an armed guard to seize upon these riches. The account in Second Maccabees must be a complete representation of the general aspect of a panic in Jerusalem. The priests in their official costume lay prostrate before the altar, 'the high-priest,' says the record, 'in such an inward agony that whoso had looked at his countenance and changing color, it would have wounded his heart.' "The Temple courts were thronged with suppliants; matrons with bosoms bared, were running frantically through the streets; maidens, unable to brook their seclusion, were peering over walls, or at every window; at every door people were standing to gather news. There too rode the pitiless officer, bent on fulfilling his mission. Suddenly the scene changed. A horse with a terrible rider clad in golden armor, was seen dashing into the Temple precinct. He trampled Heliodorus under foot, whilst on either side stood two magnificent youths lashing the prostrate intruder to the verge of death, from which he was only rescued by the prayers of the high-priest Onias. The story lives only in the legends of the time, and is not mentioned by contemporary or later historians. But when Raphael wanted to depict the triumph of Pope Julius II. over the enemies of the Pontificate, he could find no fitter scene to adorn forever the walls of the Vatican than that which represents the Celestial Champion, with the vigor of immortal youth, trampling on the prostrate robber." [1]

Apparently, during the reign of Seleucus IV. religious liberty among the Jews was not officially interfered with. The people suffered patiently injustice, insults, and exactions, provided no outrage was offered to their Temple or

[1] Stanley's Jewish Church.

their Law. In fact, during the first years the Selucidæ held sway in Jerusalem, men of order and piety had no great cause to complain. But a mighty change was being wrought among the Jews, influencing their minds and manners. Greek fashions were making progress among young men, but the "grave noble fathers" of the nation continued to be the same as they had always been. The high-priest ruled in Jerusalem as a sort of king. He set public works on foot in times of peace, and in times of danger he prepared the city to stand a siege. Jerusalem had, however, little value in a military point of view. The Greeks looked upon it merely as a Holy City, a sort of adjunct to its glittering Temple.

The Jews were not by nature men of war, but men of business; left to themselves they led orderly and quiet lives. The chief-priests and elders represented their aristocracy; the rest of the nation were either peasants or a well regulated *bourgeoisie*. But there were among them Epicurean Jews, fashionable young men, voluptuous and ambitious. Grecian art, Grecian culture, and Grecian polish had made a great impression upon them. In vain Antigonus of Socho, who had been made President of the Sanhedrim, endeavored by his maxims to combat the change that was taking place in the manners and habits of thought of the young men of his nation. When he died, his disciples, under the leadership of Zadok, founded the sect of the Sadducees in opposition to the Purists, or Chasidim, whose endeavor was, as they said, to plant "a hedge about the Law" — to build up around it a wall for its defence, and to narrow religious sympathy. "This hedge," says Dean Stanley, "was to be built up by laborious explanations, thorny obstructions, enormous developments of everything laid down in the Mosaic Law. Such was the labor of the scribes, until at last the Pentateuch was buried beneath the Mishnah, and the Mishnah beneath the Gemara."

Graetz says in this connection: "As has repeatedly occurred in the history of thinking nations, lack of moder-

ation on the one side brought forth exaggeration on the other. Those Judeans who saw with pain and rage the attempts of the Hellenists, grouped themselves into a party which clung desperately to the Law and to the customs of their fathers. . . . Every religious custom was to them of inviolable sanctity. A more complete contrast than was presented by these two parties can hardly be imagined. . . . That which was the dearest wish of the Hellenists, the Chasidim condemned as a fearful sin. . . . Again, what was dear and sacred to the Chasidim, the Hellenists looked upon as folly, and denounced as a hindrance to the welfare and stability of the community." [1]

Between these two utterly opposed parties, the mass of the people took a middle course. But in general terms it may be said that it was the aristocracy who inclined to Hellenism, and it was the poorer class, — the *Anavim* — who adhered fanatically to the letter of the Law, and prided themselves upon the sacrifices they made in their strict observance of it. It was the former class who held not merely priestly offices, but the chief power in the State. "They embodied," says the Rabbi Raphall, "as much of the views of Epicurus as could by any possibility be reconciled with the strict letter of the Law."

Hyrcanus, son of Joseph ben Tobiah, on the death of Ptolemy Philopater seems to have retired beyond Jordan, where for some time he lived the life of a bandit chief, levying contributions from the Arabs who dwelt among the mountains, deserts, and swamps of that wild country. At last he built himself among the rocks near Heshbon a fortified place of safety, which to this day is the wonder of travellers. By winding passages, doors that admitted but one person at a time, and holes for hiding-places scooped out in the rocks, every precaution was taken to guard against surprise or treachery. Hyrcanus had accumulated great wealth through the favor in which he was held by the court at Alexandria, and when he saw that the Seleucidæ were firmly establishing their rule in Palestine, he dreaded

[1] Graetz, History of the Jewish People, vol. i.

lest he should be given up to the vengeance of the Arabs, and killed himself in the year 175 B.C. Suicide had been a crime almost unknown among the Jews. The only instance recorded in the Old Testament is that of Saul, who flung himself upon his servant's sword on Mount Gilboa; but suicides at this period became frequent among the Jews. There was a general feeling among those who had imbibed Greek ideas when they adopted Greek manners, that "life was not worth living."

CHAPTER VIII.

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES.

ABOUT six years after the great battle of Raphia, in which Antiochus the Great was signally defeated by the Egyptian army, he was persuaded by Hannibal, then a fugitive at his court in Antioch, to indulge in a vast scheme of ambition, — no less than the recovery of all the Asiatic provinces rent from the Persian Empire by Alexander, and even to attack Rome on her own soil, with a small but carefully selected army, led by Hannibal himself; after which the king was to attack Egypt, and recover all the countries once held by his ancestor Seleucus Nicator in Thrace and Macedonia.

But Hannibal fell into disfavor with Antiochus, who in opposition to his advice undertook to lead an expedition into Greece. His army was completely routed at the fatal pass of Thermopylæ, and on his retreat he was warned by Hannibal that he had now a struggle before him in which he would be called upon to fight *in* Asia, and *for* Asia against Rome.

Failing to negotiate a peace with Rome, which espoused the cause of her allies, Antiochus fought a desperate battle at Magnesia, in which he is said to have lost fifty thousand men, while the Roman loss was only four hundred. After this he was forced to sue for peace on any terms. The Romans did not insist upon a cession of territory (Antiochus by a marriage contract with the young king of Egypt was in possession of Palestine), but he was called upon to pay Rome a sum equal in our money to ninety millions of dollars. This sum was to be divided into twelve parts, one part to be paid punctually every year. To ensure this

punctual payment Antiochus sent to Rome young men of good family as hostages, among them his second son Antiochus, subsequently surnamed Epiphanes. He was also to furnish the Romans annually 500,400 measures of wheat, to pay large sums to the King of Pergamus and the inhabitants of the Isle of Rhodes, who had lent their assistance to the Romans, and to deliver up his elephants and ships of war, retaining only ten of the latter for the defence of his coasts; and, lastly, he was to surrender Hannibal, his adviser and guest, to the vengeance of Rome.

But Hannibal, who had foreseen the probable result of the great battle of Magnesia, had already quitted Antioch, and became a fugitive, wandering from court to court among the petty sovereigns of the East, everywhere pursued by the bitter hatred of the Romans. At last in Bithynia, wearied by this incessant persecution, he committed suicide.

It was the extreme difficulty of raising the enormous sum to be paid annually to the Romans that led Antiochus to think of plundering the treasuries of remote temples, in consequence of which at Elymas he met his death.

Impoverished by the drain on his resources made by the debt to Rome, Seleucus, his son, was ready when occasion offered to adopt the same plan, and soon after his accession there seemed every chance of his obtaining great riches from the Temple at Jerusalem. The high-priest, Onias, who is described in Second Maccabees as "a good man, reverend in conversation, gentle in behavior, exercised from a child in all points of virtue, and zealous for the Lord," was looked upon by his countrymen as leader of the pious or Puritan party. His opponent was Simon the Benjamite, who was governor of the Temple, — head, apparently, of that committee first appointed by Ezra to see justice done to all in the distribution of the offerings. This position brought Simon into frequent collision with the high-priest, who at last banished him from Jerusalem.

This Simon was head of the Hellenist party, which was making great headway among worldlings in Jerusalem. He had two brothers, Onias, called Menelaus, and Lysimachus,

and these were in close alliance with the Tobiades, or elder sons of Joseph, the late tax collector for the Egyptian king. Hyrcanus, his son, on his retreat to his cliff fortress in the Arabian desert, had stored part of his riches in the Temple. The existence of this treasure Simon revealed to Apollonius, the king's governor in Cœle-Syria, and Heliodorus was sent to Jerusalem to possess himself of it, as has been already related. Meantime Simon the Benjamite, at the court of the king at Antioch was busy slandering Onias the high-priest, who was his personal enemy. Thus when Onias made his appearance at Antioch, to consult with the king as to how the disturbances in Judea might be brought to an end, he found himself esteemed a traitor, and detained a captive.

Onias had left in Jerusalem a brother called Joshua by his parents, who had changed his name to Jason. Jason was a leader of the Hellenist party, a close ally of Simon. He now solicited the deposition of his brother, and offered Seleucus a sum equal to about half a million dollars if he would give him the high-priest's place. He was already known at the court of Antioch as a Jew strongly tinctured with the philosophy of Epicurus, a man of polished address, and with insinuating manners. As he was of the tribe of Aaron and brother to a duly qualified high-priest, who had already named him *Sagan,* or coadjutor, while he should be away at Antioch, the Jews seem to have offered no opposition, though the appointment of their high-priest by the authority of a pagan king must have seemed to many a dangerous precedent.

Up to this time heathen worship had been kept out of Judea. So long as their Temple and their Law were not interfered with, the Jews seem to have submitted with indifference to Egyptian or to Syrian rulers. But in all other departments of civil and domestic life the Hellenistic spirit made rapid headway, and as young Jews became attracted by the glitter of Greek manners, many began to covet national liberty.

About 175 years before Christ, which is the date of the

accession of Antiochus Epiphanes, the influence of Hellenism was well established along the shores of the Mediterranean. Jews in Palestine were the only people who resisted it, but Greek fashions, even in Palestine, had taken root. All the lively and frivolous elements of Jewish society, the young, who loved novelty, and men whose sympathies were with intellectual advancement, turned towards the sun that was pouring its light upon the world; but the Puritan party in Palestine who admired only the Law, and were hostile to Greek rationalism, opposed the progress of the new ideas with all their might.

"In the end it was the Puritans who triumphed; and through their victory the Jewish faith may be said to have fulfilled the predictions of the Jewish prophets, and to have conquered the whole civilized world. It triumphed over Greek enlightenment, and over Roman power." [1]

Greek life required public establishments for bodily exercise and bodily discipline. At certain hours of the day young men were expected to engage in public feats of strength and activity, as a proper preparation for official life, and even for success in paths of learning and literature. Public baths, a gymnasium, and open porches, for bodily exercises, were needs of life to Greek young men.

The first consideration with a youthful Greek was care of his own person. Cleanliness and hygiene, even to this day, play an important part in the life of every self-respecting Oriental; but Greek training required athletic exercises; and wrestling, racing, and boxing as practised by the Greeks, shocked the instinctive modesty of Orientals. They considered public nudity as an incentive to vice, and in their gymnasiums a Jew was liable to ridicule on account of his circumcision.

The city of Jerusalem was accordingly divided against itself. Its inhabitants were of two parties. One party, madly eager to imitate Greek fashions, neglected nothing

[1] See Renan's "History of the People of Israel," vol. iv. book viii. As I have permission to make free use of my own translation of vols. iv. and v. of this work, I need make no further apology.

that would assimilate their mode of life to the manners of the Greeks. Young men adopted as a party badge a hat like those seen on the head of Mercury in all his statues; while opponents of Hellenism, men of strict piety but of narrow ideas, conformed in all things to the Jewish dress and customs of a past age, as well as to ancient ritual; abhorring what was best and what was worst in Greek civilization. The majority of the Jewish community in the rural districts, though their country was dotted over with Greek settlements, were fervent pietists, but among the aristocracy in Jerusalem there were lukewarm Jews,—many indeed who were scarcely Jews at all, and who hated the strict rules of life imposed by the Law, or Torah.

The Ceremonial Law, interpreted by traditions and enforced by civil authority, must indeed have been intolerable. We shall see how it worked under the Asmonean princes, when the whole power of the nation was in the hands of the Pharisees.

Seleucus Philometer was murdered by Heliodorus, the officer who had been repulsed by the high-priest and had fallen senseless on the threshold of the Temple. When Seleucus died, Demetrius, his son, was on his way to Rome to be exchanged for his uncle Antiochus, who had been thirteen years a hostage in that city. The news of his brother's death met Antiochus at Athens; he hurried at once to Antioch, and by help of the King of Pergamus crushed Heliodorus, whose scheme of usurpation entirely failed.

Antiochus Epiphanes might be briefly described as the prototype of Nero. Both were men who had natural abilities, both had been over-stimulated by injudicious education, both were lavish in their patronage of art, both loved to exhibit themselves before their subjects in public games, both, laying aside all sense of royal dignity, would sometimes in public play the buffoon. Neither had at heart any reverence for any deity, but they endeavored to force religious conformity on their subjects, and Antiochus set up an idol's statue, hateful to the Jews, in the Holy Temple made sacred by the especial presence of Jehovah.

The Jews have had many enemies, but this man made himself the most hated of them all. His surname Epiphanes (the Brilliant) was changed by his subjects to Epimanes (the Madman). He had learned in Rome to look with contempt on Orientals, particularly the Jews. In private life his conduct was disgraceful, but his follies and debaucheries, common enough among sovereigns in the East, would have been of no great consequence beyond the bounds of his own palace, had not his rashness led him to undertake enterprises which, ending in failure, weakened his authority. He loved Greece, and he aspired to the honor of expanding its spirit in the Orient. He knew nothing of the character, national prejudices, and opinions of the various countries that he aspired to govern. He did not comprehend that the feeling which in Greece was love of country, in Rome attachment to a city, was in Judea represented by passionate fidelity to a system of local worship. Invariably a good cause, when he adopted it, was ruined by his want of judgment. Not unnaturally, he was eager to make what he considered enlightenment and civilization spread over countries that had, as he conceived, known only inferior culture, and religions tainted with fanaticism and superstition. All this might have been brought to pass had his dreams not included Palestine. When he attacked Judaism he was measuring his strength against the eternal purpose of the Almighty. How could he have suspected that the seemingly fanatical faith of so insignificant a country was to exert an all-powerful influence over the whole world?

Antiochus soon after his accession (prompted no doubt by his flatterer and favorite, Jason) began to show his dislike and contempt for the strict pietists in Jerusalem. "In dealing with the Jews, his object was" says Tacitus, "to remove their superstition, to give them Greek customs, and thus to improve the characteristics of a most detestable race."

All government employments in Judea were given to Jewish "liberals," some of whom, to court the favor of the

king, renounced their religion and did homage to Jupiter. Such were loaded with honors, received lucrative employments, and at once put on airs of superiority. "They clothed themselves in Greek costume; they endeavored to pass themselves off as accomplished Greeks. They despised Mosaic customs, and considered those who observed them unenlightened and old-fashioned. The manners and customs of Antioch spread as if by magic through Jerusalem; a majority in the City of Priests was won over to the new ideas."[1]

Jason had not only offered large sums of money to King Antiochus to confirm him in the high-priesthood, but he engaged to do all in his power to Hellenize Jerusalem. He proceeded to build for the young men a gymnasium with open porches and galleries for spectators. Those who were in training for the games were to be registered as citizens of Antioch, and Jerusalem was to be governed by Greek municipal regulations.

The gymnasium was accordingly built, and young men rushed to it for public sports. Even priests hurried through their service at the altar to go into athletic training. Jerusalem was in a fever of innovation. Every young man seemed trying to assume the air of a Greek.

It was a dangerous time for Judaism. Had it been unchecked the Hebrew Bible and the Jewish faith might, humanly speaking, have disappeared. No scruples arrested Jason in his career. When a festival was held at Tyre in honor of the patron divinity of the city Moloch, or Melkart (identified, to please the Greeks, with Hercules), he sent a rich gift to the idol's sanctuary in order to show in the presence of King Antiochus, who assisted on the occasion, not only his generosity, but his emancipation from Jewish prejudices. Those who carried the gift to Tyre were more scrupulous than their high-priest. They paid the money, but contrived that it should be spent, not in service to Moloch, but in building war galleys for the Syrian navy.

[1] Dean Farrar, The Herods.

Jason, however, with all his sycophancy, was unable to retain his priestly office. He had taught King Antiochus that it was possible to depose a high-priest who had been appointed by his authority, and Antiochus was not slow to "better the instruction."

After three years a brother of Simon the Benjamite, named Onias, but who preferred to call himself Menelaus, supplanted Jason by larger promises. To fulfil these, he seized upon the sacred vessels of the Temple and sent many to be sold by his agents in Tyre and Sidon.

The old high-priest Onias, who had gone into retirement at Daphne, near Antioch, heard of this, and informed the king's agent, Andronicus, in the absence of the sovereign. Andronicus, bribed by Menelaus, determined to put the aged priest out of the way. He persuaded him to come forth from the temple of Apollo, where he had taken refuge, and then had him assassinated. This sacrilegious perfidy shocked both Jews and Greeks, and called forth the only instance of human feeling in Antiochus which has been recorded by Jewish historians.

Jason had been sent into exile beyond Jordan, and Menelaus "through the covetous dealings of them that were in power, remained still in his office" [1] as high-priest.

Antiochus, on his return from an expedition into Egypt, passed through Jerusalem, where he plundered the Temple, caused Menelaus to introduce him into the Holy of Holies, and, greatly irritated against the inhabitants for their sympathy with Egypt, shed torrents of Jewish blood. His visit to the Sanctuary laid the foundation for two lies, one of which, up to this day, clings, among half-civilized Anti-Semites in eastern Europe, to the popular idea of the Jews.

He reported that he saw in the Sanctuary (where there was really nothing but one great stone [2] on which the high-priest on the day of Atonement rested his censer) the figure of an old man with a long beard (presumably Moses),

[1] Maccabees.

[2] This stone, it is said, is still held sacred in the Mosque of Omar built on the site of the Temple of Jehovah.

riding on an ass, with a scroll in his hand. From this story came the fiction that the Jews worshipped the head of an ass. Among the *graffiti* at Pompeii — the writings on the walls — was found a scrawl by which some Roman legionary had endeavored to turn a Jewish comrade into ridicule, or possibly some Christian, whom, as was frequently the case in early Christian ages, he confounded with the Jews. The rude sketch represents a man in a devotional attitude before a cross, on which hangs a human figure with the head of an ass. And underneath is the inscription "ALEXAMENUS WORSHIPS GOD." The more dangerous fiction was, that Antiochus, searching the chambers of the Temple, found a Syrian bound on a bed who was awaiting sacrifice, — it being a yearly custom for the Jews, on one of their great festivals, to immolate a Gentile victim!

Two years later Antiochus made another expedition into Egypt, but the Ptolemy who then reigned, and his sister Cleopatra had sought the powerful protection of Rome. Rome delayed her assistance until assured of the issue of a war she was then waging with Perseus, the last king of Macedonia, and meantime a report reached Jerusalem of the defeat and death of Antiochus. It there caused great rejoicing. Jason hastened back from beyond Jordan and attacked Menelaus and his supporters. Philip the Phrygian, the military governor of the city, was overpowered and with his garrison took refuge in the citadel. Jerusalem was given over to anarchy and bloodshed.

Meantime the Roman Senate, always glad to interfere in the affairs of an African or Asiatic kingdom, waited only until it knew the result of the battle of Pydna in Macedonia, where King Perseus was overthrown, and the hereditary kingdom of Alexander the Great became a Roman province. Then the Senate sent Caius Popilius Læenas, who in Rome had been a personal friend of Antiochus, to deliver its commands to him wherever he might be found.

Antiochus received the ambassador on the sands within four miles of Alexandria. He advanced to meet his friend with cordial greeting, but Popilius refused his embrace, de-

manding peremptorily an answer to the written orders of the Roman Senate, which he handed to the king on an official tablet that contained only these words: "Antiochus, thou wilt abstain from making war on the Ptolemies."

On reading this message Antiochus asked time to consider the demand, and to confer with his generals. But Popilius required instant submission. With his staff he drew a circle round the king upon the sand, and said: "I require thine answer before thou shalt overstep this line."

The struggle in the king's mind must have been fierce, but he yielded obedience, and then Popilius extended his hand. Rome was becoming too powerful for either Syria or Egypt to resist.

Made furious by the affront put on him by the Roman Senate, Antiochus returned to Antioch, which by his munificence he had made a splendid city, and as he passed through Palestine he laid plans to wreak his vengeance on the defenceless Jews. It is possible that he may have suspected some nationalists among the Jews of meditating relations with the Romans; at all events public sympathy in Jerusalem and Judea was with the Ptolemies.

He lost no time in sending Apollonius, his chief collector of tribute, who commanded a large force in Samaria, to lead what is now known as a punitive expedition against Jerusalem. Apollonius (called elsewhere in Jewish writings "a detestable ringleader" and "a lord of pollution") entered the city peaceably, with soft words and fair promises, but the next day being the Sabbath, when he knew his troops would meet with no resistance, "he fell upon the city suddenly and smote it very sore. . . . And he took the spoils of the city, and set it on fire, and pulled down the houses thereof, and the walls thereof on every side. And [having destroyed much people out of Israel] they led captive the women and the children, and the cattle they took in possession."[1] The fortress of Akra was strengthened and provisioned, and Jewish Hellenists were invited to make the

[1] 1 Maccabees i. 32–40.

stronghold their place of refuge. This terrible citadel, which overlooked the Temple courts, thenceforth for many years became "a place to lie in wait against the sanctuary and an evil adversary to Israel continually."[1]

Antiochus had already carried back with him to Antioch the golden altar of incense, the table of showbread, the golden candlestick, the bowls and vases used in Jewish worship, and the golden censers. He also tore down the rich veil which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, scaled off the gold veneering on the front of the Temple, and left only the bare stones.

The patriots and pietists abandoned Jerusalem. Priests, now that the Temple worship was suspended, sought other homes. The courts of the Temple became like a wilderness, grown up with briars and thorns. Great as had once been the glory of the Lord's House, so great became its humiliation.

But worse things were to follow. Antiochus issued a terrible decree, worse than anything that had proceeded from any Assyrian or Babylonian conqueror. Here is the matter succinctly told in the words of the Jewish historian:[2]

"And King Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom, that all should be one people, and that each should forsake his own laws. . . . And the king sent letters by the hand of messengers unto Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, that they should follow laws strange to the land, and should forbid whole burnt-offerings and sacrifice and drink-offerings in the Sanctuary; and should profane the sabbaths and feasts, and pollute the Sanctuary and them that were holy; that they should build altars and temples and shrines for idols; and should sacrifice swine's flesh and unclean beasts, and that they should leave their sons uncircumcised;

[1] There has been much controversy concerning the position of Akra, but it is now generally held to have stood on the same spot as the Castle of Antonia, that is, on Mount Zion in the city of David, an eminence separated from the Temple Mount by the deep ravine called the Tyropean. The difficulty lies in the confusion between Mount Zion and the Temple Mount, both peaks of Mount Moriah.

[2] 1 Maccabees i. 41–57.

that they should make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanliness and profanation; so that they might forget the Law and change all the ordinances. And whosoever shall not do according to the word of the king he shall die!"

The Temple worship of course ceased. No priest any longer offered the daily sacrifice. Homage to Olympian Jove was substituted for offerings to Jehovah. The statue of the Greek divinity was placed upon a pedestal behind the altar of sacrifice. It was "the abomination of desolation," an object of unspeakable horror to all true Jews. The people long remembered the date of the desecration of their Temple, — the day when the statue of Jupiter was set up to preside over the altar dedicated to Jehovah. It was the 15th day of the month Kislew — the 15th day of December in the year 168 B.C. Never before had there been witnessed such ruthless desecration. Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the Sanctuary, but what was that to the installation of a strange god in the very abode of the Almighty? The expression which the Septuagint translated into "the abomination of desolation," and which we, following the Latin Vulgate, have retained, was in the original Hebrew "the very filth of desolation" — the coarsest epithet the outraged sons of Jacob could bestow.

Similar statues of Jupiter Olympus were set up in all Jewish cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem. At Gerizim the Sanctuary of Jehovah was profaned by Jove. It is probable that the Samaritans offered less resistance to the king's edict than the Jews. It is said that they even invited the officers of the king to set up their lord's divinity, declaring themselves to be of the Greek race, rather than the descendants of Hebrews.

Nor was it enough to desecrate the Holy Places. Jewish worship, even in private, was sternly prohibited. Circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath, and other injunctions laid down in the Law, were forbidden under pain of death. All copies of the Law that could be found were defaced by coarse sketches of idols, or were torn up and destroyed.

Inspectors once a month went through the towns and villages to seize such scrolls, and to discover if any case of circumcision had taken place. At the Bacchanalian festivals all persons were compelled to take part in the indecent revels, wearing crowns of ivy. The courts of the Temple became the scene of heathen orgies.

For two years (169 and 168 B.C.) the soldiers of Antiochus had lived at free quarters throughout Judea. This gave them personal knowledge of the inhabitants of the country, and enabled them to execute with great thoroughness the cruel commands of their superiors. Women were brought before the judges charged with having circumcised their infant sons. They were hung over the city wall with their babes slung on their bosoms.

There are touching stories told in the Jewish martyrology of those days, some of which may be read in our Apocrypha in the Second Book of Maccabees, — the story of the aged Eleazar, who would not break the Law by tasting swine's flesh, and when the official whose duty it was to force it on him whispered compassionately that the morsel offered him should be taken from some other animal, replied: "It becometh not our age in any wise to dissemble, whereby many young persons might think that Eleazar, being fourscore years old and ten, were now gone to a strange religion, and so they, through my hypocrisy . . . should be deceived through me."

Or of the brave boy, youngest son of the devoted mother Hermonita (known in history as the mother of the Maccabees, though there is no reason to think she was related to Judas and his brethren), who followed the example of his six elder brothers, refusing, even at the king's suggestion, to kneel down before him and pick up his royal signet-ring, fearing that this compliance might be misinterpreted into an act of idolatrous worship when reported to his countrymen.

The passage in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews in which the apostle speaks of those "of whom the world was not worthy," "who were tortured, *not accepting deliverance*,"

"who wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, in deserts, and in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth," is believed to refer to this period. The author of the First Book of Maccabees gives us few particulars of these martyrdoms, but the sublime brevity of his account is even more impressive. "Howbeit, many in Israel were resolved not to profane the Holy Covenant; so then they died."

But the terrible persecution through which the faithful passed was not suffered in vain. "Judah was searched," says the author of "From Malachi to Matthew,"[1] "and that which was unworthy cast out. Waverers returned with rekindled fervor to the God of their fathers. In their hiding-places in the outskirts of the land the faces of the Chasidim grew stern. The soldiers of Jehovah were made ready for battle, waiting in prayer for a God-sent man to lead them."

Meantime, under the stress of the persecution, many bands of religious enthusiasts fled into the wilderness. What is called the Wilderness in Scripture is a stretch of wild, rough country, full of great rocks, with many caves and hiding-places. It is unfit for agriculture, but can sustain cattle. In the dens and caves of the earth in this region the faithful endeavored to conceal themselves, but were often betrayed to the officers of Antiochus by apostates still resident in Jerusalem.

On one occasion a thousand of these fugitives, men and women with their children and their cattle, were traced into the wilderness. They were pursued, and driven into a cave, where the king's forces, believing that they would not fight upon the Sabbath day, attacked them with fire and sword, after they had been summoned to "come forth and do according to the word of the king." All were destroyed, for they refused to cast even a stone upon the Sabbath against their enemies, or to defend themselves by stopping up the mouth of the cave, saying "Let us die in our inno-

[1] "From Malachi to Matthew," by R. Waddy Moss, teacher in classics, Didsbury College, 1893.

cency; heaven and earth witness over us that ye put us to death without trial.[1]

The shock that such tragedies must have produced in the hearts of pious men would naturally find expression in earnest prayers and poems. Psalms xliv., lxxiv., lxxix., and lxxxiii., may possibly have been composed in those terrible days. At any rate they seem to express the feelings that must have been in many hearts at the time. M. Renan, however, thinks that the canonical collection of the Psalms was complete before that day, for we read in the prologue to Ecclesiasticus that the Psalter had already been translated into Greek. But the prayers of the Puritans had been heard. The Hour and the Man were at hand.

"The ancient main road from Jerusalem to Lydda, after descending the rocky slope of Bethhoron, runs along a mountain spur to a wide plain. About a mile north of this main road is the village or town of Modin, built on the southern slopes of a rocky valley. All around it the country is bare of trees, but has terraces built against the hillsides, and has still ancient sepulchres, quarries, and reservoirs cut in the limestone rock. From a knoll above the village may be caught a distant glimpse of the Mediterranean Sea. On the road below lies the white town of Lydda, and the broad, brown plain of Sharon stretches ten miles to the sea." [2]

In this little village about twenty miles from Jerusalem had settled, when persecution grew hot in Jerusalem, and the Temple worship was suspended, Mattathiah, an aged priest, descended from Eleazar and Phineas (the son and grandson of Aaron). Modin was no doubt his ancestral residence, and there he lived with his five sons, the head man of the village, looked up to and respected by its inhabitants.

Apparently he had made up his mind that when the in-

[1] A similar atrocity took place in our nineteenth century in Algeria when General Pelissier in like manner smothered Kabyles in a cave.

[2] See "Judas Maccabæus and the Jewish War of Independence," by C. R. Conder, R. E., one of the English officers employed in the exploration of Palestine.

evitable day should arrive bringing the king's officers to Mòdin, he and his sons would not try to escape into the mountains, but would remain and abide the issue, if need were, as martyrs and confessors, or if not they would set their countrymen an example of successful resistance to intolerable wrong; for "Wherefore should we live any longer?" are the words with which he closed a piteous lamentation over the desecration of the Temple and the destruction of the Holy City.

They had not long to wait. In due course the king's officers who were enforcing apostasy came into their city. Doubtless much to their surprise, they did not, as usual, find the place almost deserted. Many people were gathered there, foremost among whom stood Mattathiah and his five handsome, athletic sons.

Apelles, the king's commissioner, erected an altar to Jupiter and then addressing himself to Mattathiah invited him "to come forth and do the command of the king," promising him honor and riches, and that he and his sons should be included in the chosen band of what were called "The King's Friends," if he would advance and burn incense on the altar. But Mattathiah answered and said with a loud voice, that his words might be heard by all the crowd that surrounded him: "If all the nations that are in the house of the king's dominion, hearken unto him to fall away, each one from the worship of his fathers, and have made choice to follow his (that is, the king's) commandments, yet will I and my sons and my brethren walk in the covenant of our fathers. Heaven forbid that we should forsake the Law and the ordinances. We will not hearken unto the king's words to go aside from our worship on the right hand or on the left."

Alarmed at this defiance, which might well entail the destruction of all dwellers in the village, an apostate stepped forward to offer the required sacrifice. Mattathiah's very soul blazed with indignation. The spirit of his great ancestor Phineas rose up within him. He sprang upon the renegade and cut him to the ground. A tumult ensued, in

which Apelles and his retinue were slain, and the altar raised to Jupiter was overthrown.

Then again Mattathiah cried out with a loud voice: "Whosoever is zealous for the Law, and maintaineth the covenant, let him come forth after me!" "And," says the chronicler, "he and his sons fled into the mountains and forsook all that they had in the city."

In the mountains he was speedily joined by other refugees from Modin and the surrounding country, driving before them their flocks and herds. Daily the band enlarged, and soon it sought the rocky desert of eastern Judea, Jeshimon, the Wilderness of Tekoa or Bethaven, the scene formerly of David's adventurous life.

Before long this region was almost peopled with men "zealous for the Law," among them bands of poor and pious Chasidim. But Mattathiah took exception to the scrupulosity which would have withheld these extreme Puritans from lifting their hands in self-defence upon the Sabbath day. He made it a rule that fighting for the Law, *if its friends were attacked* upon the Sabbath, was not violating the sanctity of the Holy Day.

The Chasidim of the wilderness bore a strong resemblance to the Covenanters and Cameronians of Scotland who lived, fought, prayed, preached, and were martyred two centuries before our own day.

Among the followers of Mattathiah as in the army of the Covenant, there were two parties, the extremists and those who aimed chiefly at liberty and justice; though even these last seem to have been less eager to repulse the Syrians than to punish and massacre renegade Jews.

They made bold raids into Judea, overthrowing heathen altars, slaughtering apostates, and circumcising by force children whose parents had not dared to fulfil the Law. Multitudes of Jews who had yielded to the pressure of circumstances in dread of the fury of their rulers fled from their avenging countrymen and took refuge among the Syrians in the strong fortress of Akra, which dominated Jerusalem. Other apostates received the patriots readily,

many doubtless taking their part to avert present danger, ready when the right time came to cast in their lot with the winning side.

Old Mattathiah in the year 167 B.C. felt that his end drew near. He assembled his sons and divided among them his authority. John naturally succeeded him as head of the Asmonean family, Simon, his second son, a man of acknowledged wisdom, he appointed to succeed him in counsel; but his third son, Judas, he made commander-in-chief. These appointments excited no jealousy among the brethren. The five were closely united in affection, in days when fraternal disputes were the disgrace of reigning families in the Orient.

Besides John, Simon, and Judas, there were Eleazar and Jonathan, who in due season became memorable among their countrymen. There was never among them the smallest trace of rivalry.[1]

In the last address of Mattathiah to his sons he exclaimed: "And now, my children, be ye zealous for the Law, and give your lives for the covenant of your fathers. Render a recompense to the Gentiles, and take heed to the commandments of the Law."

"And he blessed them; and was gathered to his fathers . . . and his sons buried him in the sepulchres of his fathers at Modin, and all Israel made great lamentation over him."

[1] The names given subsequently to the five sons of Mattathiah were as follows: to John, or Johanan, Caddis, "the Holy;" to Simon, Thassi, the Promise of Spring; to Judas, Maccabæus, or the Hammerer; Eleazar was called Avaran, the Beast-sticker; Jonathan, Apphus, the Diplomatic, or the Cunning.

The name Asmonean, borne afterwards as a dynastic name by the whole family, was derived from Hasmon, or Asmon, the great-grandfather of Mattathiah. Why his name was held in especial honor by his descendants, we do not know. Nothing is said of him in history or in tradition.

CHAPTER IX.

JUDAS MACCABÆUS.

JUDAS, the "Hammer of God," appointed by his father to be commander-in-chief of the Jewish patriots, was by nature a man of war, courageous, cool, and daring, and apparently he was wholly free from any thought of personal ambition. Until shortly before his death, he took no share in politics, — he left politics to his brother Simon. His part of the work was to fight for the Law, — love for which in a man of his time and race was equivalent to our love of country, and he was ready to die for it if such were the will of God.

We may indeed say that, like other saintly enthusiasts whose deeds are recorded in history, he had little regard for others' religious liberty while strenuously defending his own.

"He was surely," says M. Renan, "a pillar in the world's history. He saved Judaism. He saved us the Bible. . . . He was one of the world's necessary heroes. . . . He played an important part in the education of mankind."

Judas had no regular force to oppose to the trained mercenaries in the Syrian legions, but he had no hesitation in confronting them. Apollonius, the king's representative in Samaria and Judea, the man who had set up an idol in the Temple and massacred thousands of unresisting Jews in the streets of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, raised an army, recruited in part by renegade Jews and Samaritans. In a first battle, probably fought not far from Jerusalem, Apollonius was killed; Jewish tradition said that he fell in a hand-to-hand encounter with Judas himself. At any rate, Judas took his sword, which served him ever after in his battles. His followers had fought the fight ill-armed, but

they supplied themselves with weapons from the field of battle.

Another army, led by a general named Seron, this time more largely composed of mercenaries, at once marched against the insurgents now flushed with victory. "I will make myself a name, and get me glory in the kingdom," said Seron; "and I will fight Judas and them that are with him, that set at nought the word of the king."

The little company of Jews watching from the cliffs that overhung the road leading up the steep pass of Bethhoron were alarmed when they saw the mighty host arrayed against them, but Judas exhorted them, saying: "With Heaven [1] it is all one to save by many or by few, for victory in battle standeth not in the multitude of a host; but strength is from heaven."

Thus encouraged, his little band, though fasting, swooped suddenly upon the Syrian host as it was painfully toiling up the rocky pass of Bethhoron. Its general was slain in the first shock, and his followers were routed with great slaughter. After this the fear of Judas and his brethren began to fall on all the neighboring countries. He himself hurried from village to village with incredible activity. Those who had not apostatized joined his forces. Those who had, he slew.

Dean Stanley's description of him, drawn from the third chapter of the First Book of Maccabees, stirs our blood.[2]

"He became the Jewish ideal of 'the Happy Warrior.' There was 'a cheerfulness' diffused through the whole army when he appeared. His countrymen delighted to remember his stately appearance as of an ancient giant, when he fastened on his breastplate, or tightened his military sash around him, or waved his protecting sword (the sword of Apollonius) over the camp of his faithful followers. They listened with delight for his loud cheer, like the roar of a young lion, as he hunted down the enemies of God. But the lasting honor which they pathetically revered as the climax of all, was, that with a true chivalry he received such as were ready to perish."

[1] 1 Maccabees iii. 18, 19.

[2] Stanley's "Jewish Church," vol. iii.

The guerilla warfare Judas inaugurated lasted two years, in the course of which he and his companions became trained warriors. The Syrians had struck no root in the land. The difficulties throughout the Syrian Empire caused by the reckless, short-sighted administration of Antiochus, grew daily more alarming. The revolt of Judea, no longer the local rising of a petty district peopled by herdsmen, became of public consequence, and threatened the integrity of the empire. Antiochus Epiphanes found it necessary to suppress it, but his treasure-chests were empty. The vast sums plundered from the Temple had been squandered in magnificent games which lasted thirty days, near Antioch, in which King Antiochus exhibited himself as a competitor, and even as a buffoon, before the astonished eyes of his subjects.

The taxes in his eastern provinces, Babylonia, Elymas, Persia, and Media, were in arrears, probably because that part of his dominions had been invaded by the Parthians. One piece of bad news after another came pouring into Antioch from the East.

Antiochus resolved to lead a great expedition into that part of his dominions. When he put himself at the head of his army he divided his forces with Lysias, a nobleman of the blood royal, appointing him regent of all his provinces west of the Euphrates, and guardian of his son Antiochus, then a child. His last command to Lysias was that he should march an army into Judea, exterminate all male Jews, sell their women and children into slavery, and plant a foreign colony in their land.

To fulfil this command Lysias at once made great preparations. He appointed Ptolemy Dorimenes Governor of Cœle-Syria, and gave him the direction of the campaign. This Ptolemy had been formerly an Egyptian officer, intrusted with the defence of Cyprus, who had deserted to Antiochus, and thus received his reward. Under him were two generals, Nicanor and Gorgias, who with a large army were to undertake the campaign. Nicanor considered their success so certain that he had invited to his camp

slave-dealers from the Phœnician cities to traffic in such prisoners as might escape being slain.

This time the adversaries of Judas avoided the dangerous pass of Bethhoron, and advanced upon Jerusalem from the west. Judah massed his forces at Mizpah. His followers were no longer a band of fanatics ready to die for the Law, they were a small army organized into regiments and battalions.

With fervent piety they made ready for the fight with prayer and fasting. The military tactics of their commander are admired to this day. The victory he achieved has been called the Maccabean Austerlitz.

"From a high rocky platform on the ridge of Mizpah," says Dean Stanley in his "Jewish Church," "the place where Alexander is said to have met the high-priest Jaddua, and where, after the Chaldean capture of Jerusalem, pilgrims met to wail over the Holy City, Judas and his followers gazed down on the deserted streets of the beloved Jerusalem, its gates closed as if it had been a besieged town, on the silent precincts of the Temple, and on the Greek fortress of Akra. Before that distant presence of the Holy Place to which they could gain no nearer access, the patriot soldiers mourned with ashes on their heads. They spread out a copy of the Law on which the Greeks had painted in mockery pictures of heathen deities. They waved the sacerdotal vestments, for which there was now no use. They showed the animals and the vegetables due for 'the first fruits,' and 'tithes.' They marched in long procession, the Nazarites first with their flowing hair, who were unable to complete their vows in the Sanctuary. At the close of the sorrowful ceremony there was a blast of trumpets, and the army was sifted of its half-hearted or pre-engaged members" — in obedience to the law laid down in the twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy.

Then Judas led his army by a long night march of twenty miles through the passes of Bethhoron, and at dawn they found themselves upon an eminence whence they could see the enemy. Then in a spirited address, ending

in devout prayer to God, that the host they saw before them might be cast down by the sword of those who loved Him, Judas, having arrayed himself for battle, announced that the next morning he should attack the enemy. "For it is better for us to die," he said, "than to behold the calamities of our people and our sanctuary."

The fight was to take place not far from Modin. The Syrian general Nicanor learned of the intention of Judas through his spies. He planned to surprise his enemies in their camp that night; for this object he despatched a considerable force under Gorgias. But Judas, who had also spies at work, was informed of his intention; as night fell he made his men take food, and then ordered them to light bright fires in their camp, which he at once deserted, and quietly drew off his forces. He led them by mountain paths which he well knew, towards the plain of Ajalon, approaching the main body of the Syrian army on its flank, as it lay encamped in a valley.

Gorgias, when he reached the silent Jewish encampment, found it empty, and concluding that Judas and his men had sought refuge in the mountains, he followed their supposed trail into the hill country, in hot pursuit.

Meantime the trumpets of Judas sounded, and his forces joined battle with the Syrians who were entrenched in their camp near Emmaus. Although the patriot force was small, their attack was so completely a surprise that, after a fierce fight, they gained a decisive victory over Nicanor.

All was over, the camp near Emmaus was in flames, and the army of Nicanor was fleeing towards the country of the Philistines, when Gorgias, with his army, returned, descended from the mountains, heard the din of battle, and saw black smoke ascending from the burning tents of the camp that he believed himself to have left in safety. He was preparing to attack Judas, when his Syrians were seized with a panic, and followed the retreating forces of Nicanor.

An immense booty fell into the hands of the victors,

amongst it the slave merchants, and the money they had brought to buy the women and children of Judean soldiers. Gorgias took refuge in the stronghold of Akra. Nicanor, disguised as a slave, reached Antioch, where he is said to have justified his want of success by declaring to Lysias "that the God who fought for the Jews was indeed mighty, and that it was worse than useless to attack them."

Lysias, however, did not give up his attempt to carry out his master's will. He raised another army, and this time approached Jerusalem from the southwest. Another engagement ensued, and Lysias retreated to Antioch, where he endeavored to recruit another army of mercenaries.

Judas did not at once proceed to besiege Jerusalem. Much as he must have had its recovery at heart, he saw that there was still work to be done in the surrounding country. But in a short time nothing hindered him from recapturing Jerusalem, and purging the Temple from the "abomination of desolation." The position of the fortress of Akra was so strong that he did not think it desirable to attempt to wrest it from the Syrians; but Syrian archers, shooting across the great ravine into the Temple courts, would be likely to disturb religious services, when they should be resumed by faithful worshippers. The walls of the city had been thrown down by Apollonius, and Judas found no difficulty in penetrating into the precincts of the Temple. The renegades fled to the protection of the Syrian garrison in Akra.

Horrible to Jewish eyes must have been the spectacle seen by Judas and his followers when they entered the sacred courts of the Temple. All was uncleanness, destruction, and desecration. Tall weeds and shrubs were growing everywhere, under whose shade lascivious heathen orgies had been carried on. The priests' chambers were torn down, the gates were burnt. "We can almost picture to ourselves," says a member of the Palestine Exploration Expedition, "the desolation of the Holy House by a comparison with the present condition of some parts of the Temple area."

While part of the army set to work at once to clear pagan horrors from the courts, another part kept the garrison at Akra in check, and hindered their interference with the workers.

The statue of Jupiter and its pedestal were broken in small pieces, and the accursed fragments were flung into a loathsome place outside the city. The ancient altar, which had been once the altar of sacrifices offered to Jehovah, had been defiled by abominable sacrifices offered on a heathen altar raised above it by the Syrians. Its stones, therefore, were carefully laid aside until a prophet should arise who could declare what it was God's will should be done with them. They remained where they were placed until the destruction of the Temple. What then became of them is unknown.

Priests who had no taint of Hellenism were appointed according to the Levitical code; probably without implicit regard to the new rules laid down by the party of the Zadokites; and everything that concerned the Temple and its services was committed to their care. Things were restored, as far as possible, to the state in which they had been three years before. The veils, the holy vessels, the seven-branched candlestick, and the table of shew-bread were made anew. "Exactly three years after the profanation of the Temple, at earliest dawn," says the Rabbi Raphall, "the priests' trumpets were sounded, a new fire was kindled on the altar by the striking of two fire stones, and so soon as the flames ascended to heaven, the lamb of the daily sacrifice was offered, the lamps were lighted, the usual portion of incense was burned, and every other part of the divine service was performed according to the Law of Moses; and from that day it was not again discontinued until the last siege of Jerusalem by Titus." [1]

The day was in truth one of great triumph for Israel,

[1] "Post-Biblical History of the Jews," by Dr. Morris Raphall, M.A., Ph.D., Rabbi preacher at the Synagogue, Greene Street, New York, 1855.

and in memory of it a new festival was established called the Feast of Lights, which to this day is observed in Jewish communities. A band of pious Jews, none of them bred to arms, with Levites for their leaders, had succeeded in wresting their Temple from one of the great powers of the earth, with a large force at its disposal. No wonder they sang songs of triumph (Psalm xxx. and Psalm lxviii. were particularly sung) and that feasting and rejoicing celebrated the occasion.

Lysias had drawn off his forces to Antioch. Judea at length was in possession of the Jews. We know not precisely the motives which induced Lysias to retreat, but his heart does not seem to have been in full accordance with the orders of his sovereign. His adversary had but ten thousand men, and even after his discomfiture he himself had still sixty-five thousand. He may have been worked upon by the feeling expressed by Nicanor, which seems to have made a great impression on the Syrians, viz., that it was useless to measure strength with the God of the Jews.

There now arose a Jewish dynasty in Judea, sovereigns who were not of the house and lineage of David. That royal race seemed set aside and forgotten. The new dynasty sprang from the tribe of Levi. They were the descendants of Asmon, whose name, being interpreted, means "The Magnate." They were the sons of Mattathiah, and are known in history as the Asmoneans.

Alas! though this dynasty was founded by heroes, in a generation or two it displayed all the worst faults of other Oriental dynasties; "to which it added," says M. Renan, "the narrowness and intolerance of degenerate Jews."

For a year and a half after the recapture of Jerusalem, Judas Maccabæus reigned almost as a sovereign over his people. As there was no high-priest, for the infamous Menelaus was shut up with the Syrians in Akra, and as the Maccabees, though not Zadokites, were of the house of Aaron, Judas, without being regularly inaugurated, seems to have exercised the high-priest's functions. Akra was the only spot in Judea that remained in possession of the

king of Syria. This fortress was filled with renegade Jews, who must have led a miserable life in their enforced captivity. Lysias, absorbed in other cares, could not find time to attack Judea, and Judas fortified the courts of the Temple.

He also built a stronghold at Bethsura, to which the Chasidim might flee if forced to evacuate the sacred city.

In all ages and in all parts of the earth, Jews have unhappily been objects of dislike to the nations that have surrounded them. Apart from the Christian prejudice against them, fostered by the Church in the middle ages, their exclusiveness (accompanied by a sense of their own superiority while conscious that others were disposed to treat them with disdain) and their separation through observance of their Law from the domestic life of other nations, are causes why, in spite of many virtues, they have never enjoyed favor with the populations around them.

The nations that dwelt upon the borders of Palestine looked with no sympathy on the Maccabean revolt. The re-establishment of worship in the Temple still further roused their hostility; especially it renewed the enmity of the Samaritans. Jews were murdered by surrounding peoples. Many were seized and sold as slaves. Judas Maccabæus held it to be his duty to avenge his co-religionists, and in doing so he showed small mercy.

The Idumeans, that is, the Edomites, who had possessed themselves of all the southern part of Palestine, were severely punished; so were the Ammonites, in spite of a large army they had collected and placed under the leadership of Timotheus, a very skillful general. But Judas penetrated their country to the edge of the vast forest lands of Mount Gilead, where he encountered Timotheus and defeated him.

On his return to Judea he was harassed by continual complaints from Jews in northern Palestine, many of whom had quitted Babylonia to settle in that region, thus avoiding submission to the rigorous rule prevailing in Jerusalem. Under the cruel despotism and weak administration of

Antiochus, all Syria and Cœle-Syria had fallen into anarchy; and the Jews vehemently asserted that the heathen who lived among them "held the knife always to their throats." Judas sent his brother Simon with a force of three thousand men into Galilee, while he himself, with his brother Jonathan, dealt with the Ammonites and Amorites beyond Jordan, who, having recovered from their late defeat, were taking vengeance for it on the Jews who lived among them. A sufficiently strong force under two generals, Joseph the son of Zacharias, and Azarias, was left to protect Jerusalem.

Timotheus was once more defeated by Judas, while in northern Palestine Simon pushed his advance to the westward, as far as Ptolemais, now called Acre. The object of these expeditions was not merely to punish outrages, but to draw in the scattered Jews, to induce them to seek security in Judea, and to strengthen the band of Jewish defenders who "stood as a wall" around Jerusalem and the Temple. The hosts of both brothers guarded a long train of emigrants of all ages and both sexes when they returned victorious to their homes.

The captains left to defend Jerusalem during the absence of Judas and his brothers had been strictly ordered to abstain from taking the offensive; but they were rash and self-confident. They attacked a village in which Gorgias, the Syrian general, chanced to be at the moment, and suffered defeat. But Judas had now become a brilliant soldier — a military chief. Although himself of the tribe of Levi, he disapproved of the participation of the Temple priests in military affairs. His object was not conquest, but the liberation of Judea. "Judea for the Jews!" might have been his war cry, but he adopted a far nobler one, "God is our help!" and he was pursuing a career of great activity and success when news came to him of the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, who had been engaged in disastrous warfare in the eastern provinces of his vast empire. He had followed the example of his father by seizing the wealth laid up in the great temples, to repair the depletion of his treasury. He breathed his last in an obscure village in

Persia, as he was returning to Babylon after plundering a famous temple of Artemis (the Eastern Diana). His son, who was only nine years old, succeeded him. On his death-bed he expressed his dissatisfaction with Lysias, and appointed Philip, one of his generals, to be guardian of the young prince and regent of the kingdom, and in token of this appointment placed the royal diadem and signet-ring in his hands. Lysias, however, having possession of the person of the young king Antiochus Eupator, ignored the death-bed wishes of his late sovereign, and retained both the person of his ward and his power.

Judas Maccabæus, as his strength and authority increased, naturally desired to capture Akra. He attacked it furiously, but it was defended with the courage of despair. The besieged, knowing the fate that awaited them if they surrendered, or if the place fell, contrived to send urgent appeals to Antioch, and Lysias, accompanied by the young king, made a vigorous effort to relieve them. He marched into Judea with a larger army than he had ever assembled before, and at a village called Beth-zachariah, not far from Bethlehem, a terrible battle was fought, in which Judas and his followers were outflanked and defeated. Extraordinary heroism was displayed by the Jews, but the disciplined soldiers of Syria proved too much for men trained in guerilla warfare. It was in this battle that Eleazar, the brother of Judas Maccabæus, earned his surname of Avaran, or the Beast-sticker. Lysias had with him not only one hundred thousand infantry and twenty thousand cavalry, but he had also thirty-six trained elephants. This probably was the first time that the "huge earth-shaking beast" had been seen by the Jews. But Eleazar, observing that one of these monsters was larger than the rest, and royally caparisoned, imagined he was bearing the young king. Regardless of his own jeopardy he crept under the belly of the elephant, and plunged his sword into its vitals. As it fell its weight crushed its destroyer.

The result of the battle of Beth-zachariah seemed likely

to overthrow all that had been gained by the heroic efforts of Mattathiah and his sons.[1] Judas fled into the hill country to the north of Jerusalem, and for some time seems to have remained in hiding. It is probable that he never again entered the Holy City, although he gained another battle over the Syrians, and took part in some political intrigues. There was evidently a reaction against him. The party of the Chasidim thought his policy too worldly-minded. But the main body of his followers was not cast down. Its members wailed, but with a heart of hope, and above all — they prayed.

Lysias, profiting by his victory at Beth-zachariah, occupied the important fortress of Bethsura, which surrendered to him for want of supplies. This stronghold has always been supposed to have had its site on a hill near the road leading from Jerusalem to Hebron, but lately a gentleman connected with the work of the Palestine Exploration Fund went in search of some ruins that might decide its location. He found nothing satisfactory, and it is now conjectured that Bethsura may have been near Jerusalem — indeed, on the middle top of the Mount of Olives, where now stands a village whose name is the Arabic version of the Hebrew Beth-zur.

After capturing Bethsura, whose garrison he did not treat with cruelty, Lysias laid siege to the now fortified Temple. No attempt had been made to provision it in case of siege. There were crowds of Jews brought from Gilead and Galilee within its precincts, and these only helped to consume the scanty store of food. Then, too, the year (163 B. C.) was a Sabbatical year, so that famine was soon felt all over Judea, war having exhausted the supplies.

But suddenly Lysias was recalled to Antioch by news that his rival Philip had reached that city, and that the

[1] An account of this battle of Beth-zachariah is fully and most graphically given in the sixth chapter of the First Book of Maccabees, but, strange to say, by Rabbi Raphall, whose work is generally so fair (though written of course with some prejudice in favor of his countrymen), it is treated as a victory for Judas, not a defeat.

forces Antiochus had led into the East were returning to oppose him. Already their advanced guard was on the borders of Syria.

It was beginning to be perceived by Lysias and his counsellors, as well as by the Jews, that the policy pursued by Antiochus had been deplorable. "Now, therefore," said Lysias, "let us give the right hand to these men, and make peace with them, and with all their nation, and covenant with them that they shall walk after their own laws, as aforetime, for because of these laws which we abolished they were angered and did all these things."

There is some reason to think that Lysias may have been influenced by the sentiments of his general Nicanor, and dreaded the power of the Divine Protector of the Jews. It is said that he even advised the young king to put to death the high-priest Menelaus, who had given his father evil counsel. The feeling among the Syrian generals was that, if possible, the sad quarrel should be speedily and peacefully settled. They were weary of fighting in the interest of a small body of Hellenist Jews. Judas seemed to have lost his power. His uncompromising party had suffered defeat, and scattered and disorganized as were now his forces, they seemed no longer formidable.

There remained a party of sincere Jews who had never apostatized, and at most had only shown some weakness. These did not share the extreme views of the Chasidim nor the burning desire of Judas to effect the complete independence of Judea and the expulsion of the Syrians. The moderate Jews limited their demands to the abandonment of the disastrous policy of Antiochus Epiphanes, and permission for the nation to live under its own religious laws.

As enlightened Syrians held the same views, a good understanding became possible, and while the siege of the Temple still continued, conferences were held by moderate men on both sides.

It is said that Roman commissioners in Syria — Q. Memmius and T. Manlius — used their influence in favor of the

Jews. In these conferences no reference seems to have been made to Judas Maccabæus; that hero had passed out of consideration.

Peace was accordingly concluded on the basis of religious liberty. The Jews were to be free to observe their Law, and to follow their ancient customs, the end for which a five years' war had been carried on; and the arrangement was satisfactory to all, except the most ardent partisans of the party of resistance.[1]

The young king Antiochus was admitted into the courts of the Temple with an understanding on the part of the Jews that nothing on the Temple Mount should be disturbed. He, however, caused the walls that enclosed it to be thrown down.

The next question that came up for consideration was both important and perplexing. Was Menelaus — a man equally detested by Jews and Syrians — to return to his holy office? While worship in the Temple was suspended there had been no need for a high-priest. Menelaus had been at Antioch living among the Syrians, and after the Temple had been cleansed and the daily sacrifices and feasts restored, it is probable that Judas himself, being of the priestly family, fulfilled the high-priest's functions. Menelaus, however, still kept the official title. To cut the Gordian knot of this perplexity, Lysias and his pupil had Menelaus removed to Aleppo, where he was smothered to death in a tall tower filled with ashes, a barbarous mode of execution reserved for men of rank. In his place the Syrians nominated a man named Jokim or Jehoiakim, who was of the sacerdotal family. According to the fashion of the day he took a Greek name, and called himself Alcimus. When the army of Lysias retired, he was left behind with a small body of troops to govern Jerusalem.

Judas Maccabæus took no part in the new treaty with the Syrians. He was busy reforming his army and strengthening his party of patriots. From time to time such Syrians as remained to keep order in the land sent

[1] *Cf.* Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. iv.

out parties against the patriot guerillas, but after striking a sudden blow these forces disappeared, and the inhabitants of the rural districts were left to their old ways.

A year after the conclusion of a religious peace in Palestine, Demetrius, eldest son and rightful heir of Seleucus Philopater (and a nephew of Antiochus Epiphanes, who had usurped his throne), escaped from Rome, where for fourteen years he had been detained as a hostage, and landed at Tripolis on the coast of Syria. He brought with him only a few hundred soldiers, but the army of Lysias seems to have been ready to revolt. They seized their general and the young king Antiochus Eupator, put them to death, and declared for Demetrius. A party of Hellenist Jews, headed by the high-priest Alcimus, made haste to wait on the new king, accusing Judas Maccabæus of having driven Jews who favored the Greeks from homes in their own land.

The rule of Alcimus in Jerusalem had been very weak. Both parties, the Hellenists and the Chasidim, uttered "railing accusations" against him. These complaints induced Demetrius, now established at Antioch, to investigate the state of things in his province of Judea. He sent a high commissioner to Jerusalem, to inquire into the facts, and to support (by force of arms if necessary) the authority of Alcimus.

This commissioner's name was Bacchides, a general high in favor with the new king. He had rank, courage, and ability, but he was beyond measure cruel and arbitrary. The Chasidim at Jerusalem had never objected to Alcimus as an authorized high-priest. They opposed him upon other grounds. Bacchides made arbitrary arrests of men who came to him for mere purposes of conference. He even put sixty of a deputation to death at once and filled a well with their dead bodies.

At length he returned to Antioch, leaving a strong force of Syrian soldiers with Alcimus, who was not, by himself, strong enough to preserve order in Jerusalem, and when he attempted it he only increased his unpopularity.

Meantime Judas Maccabæus was becoming daily stronger,

but he did not leave the mountain districts, where he was organizing a patriot army.[1] His countrymen found that they had now to make choice between him and the Hellenist Jews, who were unable to rally the bulk of the nation, which began to perceive that Judas, after all, was right, and that no real good was to be hoped for from the Syrians.

Alcimus went to Antioch, and explained this state of affairs to the new king. The result was that Nicanor was sent to Judea with a fresh army, but his mission was less to fight than to negotiate. He proved both treacherous and vindictive. He laid a snare for Judas, which the Jewish hero managed to escape. Judas subsequently defeated him in a slight engagement and forced him to fall back on Akra.

Nicanor, after this repulse, was not ill received in Jerusalem. The priests showed him how, under the direction of Alcimus, they were offering sacrifices to Jehovah to procure His favor for their Syrian sovereign; Nicanor scorned their advances. He was rough and threatening, and declared, with a fierce gesture, that if Judas did not surrender to him he would set fire to the Temple.

The Syrian and Jewish armies were then within sight of each other, and early in the year 161 B.C. they fought another pitched battle at Adasa, a place not far from Modin. Nicanor's forces were defeated and himself killed. His head and the hand with which he had menaced the Temple were cut off and hung up on the highway, beside the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem. The country was all in favor of Judas. Peasants intercepted and slew the fugitive soldiers of Nicanor. A feast was instituted in commemoration of the victory, which was kept for two centuries in Jerusalem. It fell on the same day as the Feast of Purim.

If Judas ever concluded a treaty of alliance with Rome (which M. Renan thinks doubtful, but which is rendered

[1] The Rabbi Raphall seems to think that Judas was made Governor of Judea when peace was concluded with Lysias, but there is no evidence for this in the First Book of Maccabees. The Rabbi may have followed some tradition in the Talmud.

probable by many corroborative circumstances) it was at this period. Rome was becoming very powerful in the East. It had acquired a strong hold over the kings of Syria; it had assisted other feeble kingdoms or provinces in Asia to oppose them; it was the declared enemy of Demetrius Soter, and it seems *à priori* probable, especially if Roman commissioners at Antioch had used their influence with Lysias in favor of the Jews, that Judas should have turned to Rome in his extremity. At any rate there is a very full account in the eighth chapter of First Maccabees of the embassy he sent to the Roman Senate. That account contains some blunders, not unnatural from the pen of a provincial, unfamiliar with the constitution of the Roman republic, but it contains also a full account of Rome's doings in the East during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, and of the feeling her power and greatness excited among Greeks in the Oriental world. We have also an account of the same period from the pen of Polybius, a contemporary historian, several of whose books are now lost to the world.

The Jewish document, which is too long to quote here, but which may be read in the First Book of Maccabees,[1] begins thus: —

"Now Judas had heard of the fame of the Romans, that they were mighty and valiant men, and such as would lovingly accept all that joined themselves unto them; and made a league of amity with all that came unto them, and that they were men of great valor. It was told him also of the wars and noble acts which they had done among the Galatians,[2] and how they had conquered them, and brought them under tribute, and what they had done to the country of Spain[3] for the winning of the mines of the silver and gold which is there, and that by their policy and patience they had conquered every place, though it was very far from them, and the kings that came against them from the uttermost parts of the earth, till they had discomfited them, and given them a great overthrow, so that the rest did give them tribute every year."

[1] I Maccabees viii. 1–16.

[2] The Gauls, or possibly the Gauls settled in Galatia, subdued by Manlius Varro twenty years before.

[3] The Second Punic War.

The author of the Book of Maccabees goes on to commemorate other Roman victories, —

"how they destroyed and brought under their dominion all other kingdoms and isles that at any time resisted them, . . . and (finally) that they were greatly exalted, yet that for all that none of them wore a crown, or was clothed in purple to be magnified thereby."

In consideration of these things Judas chose two ambassadors who had taken Grecian names, and sent them to Rome to make a treaty of amity with so powerful a nation.

The Roman senate, always glad to find occasion to interfere in the affairs of any foreign people, lent a favorable ear to the ambassadors, and a copy of the treaty of amity is given in Maccabees by which the Romans pledged themselves to help the people of the Jews with all their heart, in case of any warlike demonstration against them — the same obligation towards the Romans being binding on the Jews.

This treaty had an important influence on the fortunes of Judas, though in a different way from that which he had planned. Bacchides collected another army. Alcimus the high-priest marched with him. Judas with about three thousand men was not far off, but his men lost heart. It is possible that many were reluctant to bear arms against the high-priest. The Rabbi Raphall tells us that the foreign policy of Judas was distasteful to those who had most faithfully followed his banners. He even gives a Jewish tradition that the leader of the Chasidim, on the eve of battle, said to his commander, "Is it not written: Cursed be the man who placeth his dependence in flesh, while from the Lord his heart departeth?" With these words he withdrew, and with him so many of his followers that only eight hundred were left with their great captain. The officers of Judas urged him to retire until he could collect a larger force, but he answered "God forbid that I should do this thing, and flee away! Retreat before these men? Never! If our time be come let us die manfully for our brethren and let us not stain our honor!"

With some of his bravest followers he flung himself upon the right wing of Bacchides, and gained a partial victory, but he was then crushed by the Syrians on the left.

We can hardly say that he fell in the midst of his triumph, for his party was suppressed for several years. But his cause was to revive. The fruits of his heroism, as is the case in the history of most heroes, were to be reaped in after years by others.

The rule of the Seleucidæ in Palestine had in fact come to an end. Though some men may call Judas a fanatic he was fighting in the cause of the human race.

"The great courageous soul of Judas," says M. Renan, "was that of a man of the people." His body was lifted from the field of battle, and he was buried at Modin in the sepulchre of his fathers. In after years a splendid monument was erected over them.

The last fight of his life took place in a district perhaps the most rugged in Palestine. Its valleys are surrounded by mountains the highest in Judea, from whose summit may be discerned the snowy peak of Hermon in Galilee, and a distant glimpse may be obtained of the Mediterranean Sea. The valley was in old times the boundary between Benjamin and Judah, and Bethel was not far from the spot where this battle took place.

The public life of Judas had lasted only eight years.

CHAPTER X.

JONATHAN, BROTHER OF JUDAS.

"NOW, at the death of Judas," exclaims the author of the First Book of Maccabees, "the wicked sprang up like grass upon the mountains, and the workers of iniquity flourished on every side."

The country was in a terrible condition, — worse than anything that had been felt since days of old. It had been ravaged by six years of ruthless warfare, and, in addition to all this, there was a famine in the land.

The answer of the Roman Senate to the ambassadors sent by Judas Maccabæus did not reach Judea until after that hero's death. The proposals that he made had been favorably received. The reply of the Senate was engraved on brass and sent to Jerusalem, that it might be treasured by the Jewish people "for a memorial of peace and confederacy." The Senate also advised Judas and his adherents that warning had been sent to King Demetrius that he was not "to make his yoke heavy" upon Rome's new allies; but this warning must have arrived too late to prevent the campaign which resulted in the overthrow and death of Judas Maccabæus at Eleasa.

The whole land fell into the power of Bacchides, the Syrian general; who, in order to put an end to such raids as Judas had made among the villages in search of renegades, garrisoned and strongly fortified many fortresses and cities; hoping that they might serve as places of refuge for moderates and Syrian sympathizers. Akra was enlarged, and in it were confined as hostages the children of leading Jews suspected of disaffection to the Syrian government.

The high-priest Alcimus proposed to break down in the

Temple the screen of partition which separated Gentile worshippers from Jews, but this brought furious remonstrances from the pietists. They considered it would be subversive of the Law; and when Alcimus was stricken with paralysis as the work was about to begin, they considered it a just judgment sent upon him by the hand of God.

After the death of Alcimus the office of high-priest remained vacant for seven years. This interregnum led in the end to the sovereignty of the family of Mattathiah, — the Asmonean dynasty.

Meantime the Chasidim, together with the main body of the people, were not slow to recognize the ingratitude with which, in a moment of blind bigotry, they had treated their noble leader. Everywhere oppressed and maltreated by the Syrians and by the followers of Alcimus, they began to flock around Jonathan, the brother of Judas, the youngest of his family, and chose him for their leader. Jonathan had less military genius than his illustrious brother, but he bravely accepted a post which he could not but perceive was hedged about with dangers.

Bacchides had made himself master of Judea, and open war against his armies was impossible. Jonathan and his brother Simon, with their whole band, resolved to take refuge in the wilderness, where the national movement had grown up eight years before. They fell back, therefore, beyond Tekoa, and encamped near a great water-tank called the Well of Asfar. There Jonathan and his comrades led the life of Bedouin Arabs, very much as David had done on the same rocky moors. They were on good terms with the Nabathean Arabs[1] who lived beyond the Dead Sea, and put into their charge their wives, children, and cattle. A complete epic of their adventures at this period was sung in the desert, like Arabian tales, and a portion of the poem is still in existence.[2] Especially famous was their fight with a hostile Arab tribe, the sons of Jambri. John Maccabæus, surnamed Gaddis, had been intercepted and killed

[1] Descendants of Nebaioth, the eldest son of Ishmael.

[2] 1 Maccabees ix. 37–41.

by men of this tribe while conveying some booty to the custody of the Nabatheans. His brother Jonathan made haste to avenge him. Learning that a man of rank among the Beni Jambri was about to wed the daughter of a neighboring Arab chief, he and a party of his followers crossed the Jordan, and concealing themselves behind rocks in the desert, watched the bridal procession as, with drums and other music, it marched joyously on its way. Then as the expectant bridegroom and his friends came forth to meet the procession, the Jews darted from their ambush, fell upon the bridal party, and killed all who did not escape to the hills. "Thus," says the chronicler, "was the marriage turned into mourning, and the noise of their melody into lamentation."

When news of this exploit reached the Syrian general, coupled with the information that Jonathan and his men were beyond Jordan, Bacchides, knowing that his soldiers would be safe from attack upon the Sabbath day, seized the fords and crossed safely over the river.

The position of Jonathan was very perilous; he seems to have been in a loop of land near where the Jordan flows into the Dead Sea, but it so often overflows its banks that the place is called the Marsh. Before him flowed the river, while around him was dense jungle, and marshy ground.

Jonathan, with the military eloquence which had often animated the soldiers of his brother, cried out to his followers: "Come on, and let us fight for our lives; for it is not now as it was in time past [when we fought from advantageous positions on the hills]; ye see plainly that the battle is before us and behind us [the sons of Jambri in our rear], and the water of the Jordan is on this side and on that; the morass likewise, and the wood. Neither is there any place left for us to turn aside. Therefore now cry ye unto Heaven, that ye may be delivered from the hand of your enemies."

This speech reanimated the courage of the Jews, and they fought valiantly. But the Syrians felt themselves secure of their prey. Then Jonathan and his men, all armed

as they were, leaped into the river, and swam to the opposite bank. The soldiers of Bacchides, more heavily armed, did not attempt to follow them. The Syrian general, we know not precisely why, — for, though foiled, he had not suffered a defeat, — went back to Jerusalem. It is said that in the *mêlée* Bacchides and Jonathan encountered each other, and that the Jewish leader was about to strike the Syrian a powerful stroke, when Bacchides avoided it; and ever after he seems to have held Jonathan in personal esteem.

"It was by this dash of soldierly temper in the Asmonean blood, that that family," says M. Renan, "kept up the energy which asceticism often frets away. . . . We may picture to ourselves the government of the Seleucidæ as we do that of all Oriental governments, that of Turkey in particular, which really exists only in the towns. It never penetrates into the mountains, never ventures into the deserts. They thus become the mustering places of bold spirits, who live together a life of entire freedom, holding themselves in reserve for what the future may bring to pass."

For some years after this, Bacchides retired to Antioch, and, Alcimus being laid in his grave, things went on quietly in Judea. There was less blood shed than there had been any time during the Syrian dominion. Jonathan did not continue the punitive raids by which his brother had sought to terrify apostate Jews. Mutual hatreds were less bitter than they had been. The band of Judas Maccabæus, patriots and saints when he held the command, adopted the habits of Bedouin Arabs. There was energy among them, and discipline, but it was of the Arab fashion. Day by day they acquired more and more the character of a free company, ready to take service with whoso would employ them.

Bacchides, during his administration of Judea, had not always resided in Jerusalem, though all the affairs of his province passed through his hands. It seems as if the Syrian government, relinquishing its hope of forcing re-

ligious conformity among the Jews, became indifferent to the disputes of the religious parties in Jerusalem, and leaned first to one and then to the other according to circumstances.

Jonathan, in the wilderness or among the marshes of the Jordan (at this day covered by a jungle impenetrable to soldiers or police), lived remote from government and from authority.

His followers discovered near one of their haunts the ruined remains of a fortress called Beth-Basi.[1] They were not at that time on good terms with the Arabs in their neighborhood, or with the sheikh of a more distant tribe, called Odomara. These men persuaded Bacchides that with their assistance it would be easy to capture Jonathan and his band.

A surprise was contemplated, but it turned out a failure. The band got warning, seized fifty men who were in the plot, and slew them. Then Bacchides laid siege to Beth-Basi. Jonathan, leaving the fort in charge of his brother Simon, stole out and attacked Odomara and the other hostile Arabs. He came upon them in their tents, defeated them, and bore off many prisoners. Whilst he was thus engaged Simon made a successful sortie, and contrived to burn the wooden siege engines of Bacchides. While the Syrians in confusion were trying to extinguish the conflagration, Jonathan returned, and together with Simon, attacked the Syrians vigorously. The Jews fared best in the encounter. This so enraged Bacchides against Odomara and the other Arabs who had drawn him into the misadventure, that he caused several of them to be put to death.

We know little about this affair; its records are incomplete. What we do know is, that what began with hostility ended with reconciliation. Jonathan sent agents to Jerusalem to negotiate a peace. It is not improbable that Roman interference in his favor suggested its terms. A complete amnesty was granted to him and to his people, together with a promise that no inquiry should be made

[1] Bethhogla or Bethhagla.

into their deeds, whether past or future. Prisoners on both sides were to be set at liberty, and Jonathan with his armed force, together with the captives now released, not only ceased to be criminals and rebels, but passed without any interval of time into the service of that government against whose authority they had been in arms for many years.

Such changes are not uncommon or remarkable in Eastern lands; for example, in the case of Akil Aga during the events in Syria in 1860.[1]

Enlisted in the service of the Syrian king and clothed with the protection and powers of his government, Jonathan, who by the terms of the peace was not to live in Jerusalem, took up his residence in Michmash, on the borders of the wilderness, a city in a naturally strong position. The first use he made of his authority was to drive out from it all "the ungodly," that is, renegade or apostate Jews.

For some reason unknown to us, Bacchides at this time quarrelled with the Hellenists in Jerusalem, to whom he had previously looked for support, and "he now found in Jonathan's band exactly the force he needed to assist him. They were soldiers trained by long experience in the wilderness, with a chief whose love of order and whose personal valor ensured the pacification of the country."[2]

Meantime disturbances in the tottering empire of Syria had great influence on the fortunes of the Jews. A fresh revolution took place in Antioch, and gave new hope to such provinces as wished to become independent.

Demetrius, whose escape from Rome when a hostage the Senate had never forgiven, had further provoked the Romans by his intrigues with princes of neighboring Asiatic countries. He had also offered large bribes to the Egyptian governor of Cyprus to make the island over to him, and he had shown no alacrity in obeying the command of the Roman Senate in his dealings with the Jews. With these

[1] *Cf.* Renan.

[2] Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. iv.

causes of dissatisfaction Rome aided and abetted a deception set on foot by certain petty princes on the frontier of Syria, especially the King of Pergamus, who, having discovered a low-born Syrian who bore a striking likeness to Antiochus Eupator, had him tutored to play the part of that monarch's son, and caused him to be presented as such to the Roman Senate. Whether convinced of his pretensions or not, it suited the policy of Rome to acknowledge him to be the heir of Antiochus Eupator; and it is curious to remark that the mere fact of his having received the seal and sanction of his pretensions from Rome herself, seems to have had such influence on the author of the First Book of Maccabees and on Josephus (both of whom were under the spell of Rome) that they ventured to throw no doubt on the pretensions of young Balas, who assumed the name of Alexander. After his visit to Rome he landed in Syria (153 B.C.), and was at once proclaimed king by the garrison at Acre. Jonathan, who had little reason to uphold the cause of Demetrius, skillfully profited by the fierce war that ensued, to obtain from the chiefs on both sides an increase of power. Demetrius, hoping for his assistance, gave him authority to raise troops, and restored the hostages confined in Akra. Jonathan then entered Jerusalem, where the authority of his family had ceased for ten years. His permission to raise troops, he used to enlist a band of those opposed to Hellenism, at which terror fell upon apostates. Those who had opposed him in the last revolt fled for their lives. The citadel of Akra, and the stronghold of Bethsura were the only places still garrisoned by Syrian troops; the rest had been ordered northward to oppose the young pretender. Alexander Balas, upon his part, now began to bargain for the powerful assistance of the Jewish leader. Demetrius had offered Jonathan large bribes, but Balas outbid his rival. He sent the chief a letter in which he addressed him as "his brother," offered him his friendship, and asked for his in return; appointed him high-priest of the Jews and proffered him a purple robe and a golden crown, — an oriental way of causing him to be recognized as

a vassal-king, and also as a man whom the king delighted to honor.

On receiving this letter, Jonathan submitted his decision as to the high priesthood to the advice of his council. On receiving the opinion of these chief men that he ought to accept the office, he assumed the official robes of the high-priest, which was the mode of investiture. He was of a priestly family, of the tribe of Levi, although he was not descended from Joshua, the son of Josadak. Without scruple, therefore, he made ready to officiate as high-priest at the approaching Feast of Tabernacles. In the mean-time he did not neglect his military duties, but continued actively to strengthen his army.

One great end for which Judas and his brothers had long fought was thus accomplished. The independence of Judea was virtually attained, not alone by their patriotism or courage, but by dissensions among rival pretenders to the Syrian throne. "Towards the close of the year 152 B.C. Jonathan, under a very few restrictions, was the sovereign of Judea."[1]

The Jews had grown indifferent to their Syrian rulers, but loyalty to their high-priest was in every Jewish heart. Time proved that military, political, and priestly power could not be successfully united in one man; but when Jonathan assumed the dignity of high-priest, his acceptance of the appointment seemed the only way out of national difficulties.

The only man left of the family of Zadok, the high-priest appointed by Solomon to supersede Abiathar (who was of the house of Ithamar and of the family of Eli), was Onias, the son of Onias III.; but Jason, Menelaus, and Alcimus had all, by Syrian appointment, succeeded his father. He had never been recognized as heir to the high-priesthood in Judea; he had lived from his boyhood among the Jews of Alexandria; with Dositheus, another Jew, he had been a trusted servant of the King of Egypt, and about this time sought from him permission to build a temple at Leon-

[1] 1 Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. iv.

topolis, as nearly as possible like that of Jerusalem, in fulfilment of prophecy in Isaiah, which he interpreted as approving of his scheme.[1] This imitative temple long survived. It lasted five years after Titus destroyed the Temple at Jerusalem, when it also was destroyed by Vespasian.

Demetrius, when he found that Alexander Balas had secured the friendship and alliance of Jonathan, addressed a proclamation to the *Jewish people*, in which he avoided any mention of Jonathan, but promised remission of all taxes, and numerous other tempting things. "This letter," says Rabbi Raphall, "is extremely curious, showing the extent of the ramifications of the manifold and vexatious exactions which the kings of Syria imposed upon their subjects. As such it bears a remarkable resemblance to the decree passed in France on the memorable night of Aug. 4, 1789, by the Constituent Assembly, abolishing forever the exactions imposed by the Feudal System."

Not long after this, Demetrius was defeated and killed, and Alexander Balas, recognized by Rome as the legitimate descendant of Antiochus Eupator, had the good fortune to secure the hand of Cleopatra, daughter of the King of Egypt. The marriage took place at Ptolemais with great pomp. Jonathan was invited to attend it, and was received on the footing of a brother-sovereign by the two kings.

Certain Hellenist Jews took this inappropriate occasion to approach Alexander Balas with complaints against Jonathan, but they were driven, with threats, from the royal presence, and ordered never to renew such accusations.

Five years later (147 B. C.) another Demetrius, son of the dead rival of Alexander Balas, landed in Syria, bringing with him an army of Cretan mercenaries, and proclaimed himself heir to his late father's throne. Jonathan

[1] At that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar in the border thereof to the Lord. . . . Yea, they shall worship with sacrifice and oblation, and shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and shall perform it." — ISAIAH xix. 19, 21 (Revised Version).

hastened to assist Balas. The Jewish people have always been reluctant to renounce their allegiance to any sovereign to whom it has been pledged. Besides this, Alexander Balas, unlike any other sovereign of Syria, had been faithful to his promises, and Jonathan could not but be conscious that in sustaining him he was acting in concert with the mighty power of Rome. But the reign of the usurper was nearly at its close. Demetrius took Antioch; Alexander Balas fled to Arabia, where he was beheaded by an Arab chief, and the Egyptian princess, his widow, became the wife of Demetrius, the conqueror.

Jonathan's earnest desire was to obtain possession of Akra, and he thought that civil war and anarchy in the Syrian kingdom afforded him a good chance for success. As the general and ally of Alexander Balas he had shown skill in military tactics, and he and his men had become renowned for generalship as well as valor. During one of his campaigns in the cause of Balas, Jonathan had had the satisfaction of destroying the ancient temple of Dagon at Ashdod. When Balas had fallen, and all Syria was in a state of anarchy, he deemed it the right moment to reduce the citadel of Akra, but the refugees in that stronghold, greatly alarmed, implored help from young Demetrius, who in great wrath hastened from Antioch to Acre, whence he sent to Jonathan ordering him to attend him there, and in the meantime to suspend operations against Akra. Jonathan obeyed this summons, and went with a long train of soldiers, priests, and elders to face a probable peril. He took with him also great quantities of gold and silver, besides other superb presents. By these gifts he gained the good will of Demetrius, who granted him everything he asked, except the evacuation of Akra. Three large districts were detached from Samaria and added to Judea, while the tribute due from these districts was compounded for three hundred talents in ready money ($300,000). The later kings of Syria were always in pecuniary difficulties. They were kept in power only by the aid of mercenaries.

If we are surprised that after so many disasters money seems always to have been abundant in Jerusalem, we must remember the rich offerings which yearly flowed into the Temple from Jews who dwelt in foreign lands. Jonathan, too, in his campaigns and *razzias*, had probably acquired much booty. Nominally, he was a vassal of the King of Syria, but he was really an ethnarch or khedive, ruling independently in Jerusalem, making treaties for his country, and looking out for her aggrandizement and prosperity.

The empire of the Seleucidæ was hastening to its ruin. Demetrius I., Alexander Balas, and Demetrius II. had, indeed, put forward a Seleucid title to the Syrian throne, but at length a mere adventurer, Deodatas, known in history by the name of Tryphon, aspired to the sovereignty. He was a wretch capable of any crime. His revolt was making progress while Jonathan was negotiating with Demetrius II., and that king was willing to grant the ethnarch almost any terms he asked, provided he would furnish him with reinforcements. Jonathan therefore sent to Antioch three thousand "strong men."

The population of Antioch was on the point of overthrowing Demetrius, when these "strong men" arrived, and checked the revolution. They returned to Jerusalem laden with gifts and spoils. But Demetrius was grateful only for a little while. With the perfidy of his race he shamelessly broke his promises, and his behavior to Jonathan was such that that hero considered himself released from his engagements. He formed an alliance with Tryphon and with a boy, the son of Balas, whom he had set up as king of Syria, under the title of Antiochus VI.

Jonathan was, in consequence, confirmed by Tryphon in all his offices and privileges, while his brother Simon was made military governor over all the coast country from Cape Blanco (called the Ladder of the Syrians) to the borders of Egypt.

Never had Jonathan shown more energy and activity. Ascalon, Gaza, and Damascus beheld him as a conqueror. At one time, while passing through Galilee, he fell into an

ambush, was attacked by some soldiers of Demetrius, and in that hour came near losing all that he had gained during a long and laborious existence. He returned, however, in safety to Jerusalem. "But no man," says M. Renan, "in those troubled times, could be certain of having one hour of real security and repose."

Jonathan seems never to have laid down his arms, nor in his office of high-priest to have forgotten that he was a military leader. In all his expeditions he was ably assisted by his brother Simon. Together they besieged and captured the stronghold of Bethsura, garrisoned by apostate Jews; these were not, however, massacred, as they expected to be, but were forced to flee the country, and to give place to a new garrison of patriots and Chasidim.

The Romans were now extending their power and influence into the Eastern world, but their institutions were not clearly understood among the Jews, who, according to what is said in the First Book of Maccabees, fancied that there was but one consul at Rome.

Jonathan, though trained as a general, did not reign as a despot. He consulted the Elders who formed his council upon all important occasions. Together they agreed on the importance of erecting new fortifications for the defences of Jerusalem. Jonathan's project was to build up an immensely high wall which would shut off all communication between Jerusalem and Akra. This wall cut off the garrison from their water supply at Siloam, and prevented their archers from molesting the worshippers who came up to the Temple.

Three years passed, and Tryphon began to plot against the boy king whom he had set upon the throne of Antioch; but he foresaw that Jonathan, faithful to the memory of Alexander Balas, would prove a most dangerous opponent to his scheme of treachery. He therefore resolved to get the Jewish chief into his power. He invited him to an interview at Scythopolis. There Jonathan came with a strong force. By various pretexts Tryphon succeeded in separating him from the bulk of his army, and drew him

towards Acre, promising to make him master of that important city. Jonathan, wary as he was by nature, fell into the snare. He entered Acre with only a thousand men. The gates were immediately closed. Jonathan was taken prisoner. His men were massacred, and the heroic chief of Israel, now an old man, fell into a captivity from which he was never released (143 B.C.).

When news of this disaster reached Jerusalem, his brother and his people believed him to be dead, and mourned for him as truly as they had done for Judas Maccabæus, their first patriot leader. Although Jonathan had exercised the official functions of a high-priest, and had had all the authority of a sovereign, he was never invested with the outward marks of royalty. It was his brother Simon, who, thirty years after the first outbreak of the revolt, — years that he had spent in warfare and in counsel, — attained such recognition.

CHAPTER XI.

SIMON AND JOHN HYRCANUS.

IT had been long before agreed — for the sons of Mattathiah, who lived in times of sudden change and frequent danger, were above all things men of order — that in case death or misfortune set Jonathan aside, his place should be filled by Simon, who was considered to possess great prudence and an especial talent for government.

The position thus inherited by Simon was extremely difficult. Had there been a strong government at Antioch, he might easily have been ruined. But the Syro-Greek empire was falling to pieces. Tryphon was little more than a captain of banditti. After the capture of Jonathan, he lost no time in murdering the boy king, in whose name he had professed to hold authority, and placed himself at once upon his throne.

The first act of Simon (furious against Tryphon) was to conciliate Demetrius. He sent him a golden crown in recognition of his claim to be the lawful ruler of the Syrian empire, and, in return, asked remission of tribute for his country, and the recognition of Jewish independence. Demetrius replied to his overtures by a letter which was in fact a charter of independence for Judea: —

KING DEMETRIUS TO SIMON THE HIGH-PRIEST AND FRIEND OF KINGS.

Greeting: The golden crown,[1] and scarlet robe which ye sent us, we have received, and we are ready to make a steadfast peace with you and to write to our officers to confirm the im-

[1] 1 Maccabees xiii. 36–40. The English translation says "palm branch." M. Renan translates it "a golden crown." Jewish authors also speak of the offering made by Jonathan to Demetrius as a "golden crown."

munities which we have granted. And whatsoever covenants we have made with you shall stand, and the strongholds which ye have builded shall be your own. As for any oversight or fault committed unto this day, we forgive it; and the crown tax also which ye owe us; and if there was any other tribute paid in Jerusalem it shall no more be paid. And look who are meet among you to be in our court, and let them be enrolled, and let there be peace betwixt us.

"And thus," says the writer in the First Book of Maccabees, "the yoke of the heathen was taken away from Israel."

From this year (143 B.C.), the Jews dated their independence, and after receiving the letter of Demetrius, Simon began to exercise the chief prerogative of an independent sovereign by putting his superscription on his coins. Beautiful shekels and half-shekels were coined, bearing the words "Jerusalem the Holy. Shekel of Israel." The Jews ceased to use the Syrian calendar for the computation of time, but dated everything from the accession of Simon. All public documents began, "In the . . . year of the High-Priest, Commander of the Army, and Prince of the Nation, Simon."

At this time the nations who lived on the frontier of Palestine, and who all hated the Jews, thought their government was weak, and that the hour had come for their extermination. Simon, as soon as his authority was established, proceeded to drive Greeks and renegades from the strong fortresses that studded the country; especially he sent a considerable body of troops to occupy Joppa. Tryphon, he heard, was coming down the coast with an army, having Jonathan his captive in his train, and that, landing at Joppa, his design was to assault Jerusalem. Foiled in this purpose, however, he marched his troops across Palestine and proposed to attack Jerusalem on the northeast, but an extraordinary snowstorm blocked the hill-roads, and he had to turn aside into the plains of Gilead. There he was met by agents from Simon, or possibly by Simon himself. It was known that he needed



CLEOPATRA.

money to pay his dissatisfied soldiers, and he demanded as a ransom for Jonathan one hundred talents, and the deliverance as hostages of his two sons.

Simon was well aware that he could place no trust in the honor or honesty of Tryphon, but he could not bring himself to neglect any chance of saving his brother. He paid the money, and delivered the hostages,[1] but Tryphon still kept possession of Jonathan, and threatened to attack Jerusalem. The Jews were then eagerly engaged in pushing on the siege of Akra. Water and provisions were growing scarce in the citadel, and the garrison implored Tryphon's assistance. He sent them a small body of Arab cavalry, which proved of little use. He then gave up the attempt to succour Akra, and, disheartened by the obstacles he had met with, began his retreat towards Antioch, first murdering the noble Jonathan, whom he had dragged after him in his wanderings. The Maccabees subsequently recovered the corpse, and it was buried in the family sepulchre at Modin.

More than ever the people of Judea now turned their eyes towards Rome. Its power in the East seemed continually to increase. Rome had already rendered services to the Jews, and might prove an invaluable protectress in case they were again engaged in a war with Syria. The Romans were always ready to help the weak with a view of weakening the strong, and at this time, as we know from Latin sources, there was a considerable colony of Jews in Rome, who may have exercised some influence on their nation's affairs.[2]

Simon ruled from 143 to 135 B.C. His reign was prosperous. "The apostates were got rid of; the lukewarm confirmed, the poor were protected, the strongholds re-

[1] The sons of Jonathan are heard of no more in history; once in the hands of Tryphon they were probably killed, but Jonathan had also a daughter. She was married to Mattathias ben Simon Psellus, and became the ancestress of Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian.

[2] Josephus at the time of his death was writing a history of the rule of the Seleucid kings. The work is now unfortunately lost. We do not know if it was ever completed.

paired and provisioned, the Temple was embellished, and its sacred vessels were made richer still." [1]

Gezer and Joppa were made Jewish cities. In Gezer Simon built himself a house, and made his home there. We are told that when a once pagan city had been taken, all idolaters in it were expelled, every heathen house was purified, and not till then did the conquerors take possession of the place with songs of rejoicing. The city was at once repeopled with patriots and Chasidim. At Gezer the observance of the Law was so rigorous that inscriptions were set up on the roads to show how far a pious Jew might venture to walk upon a Sabbath day.

At last the accursed Akra fell. For more than thirty years it had stood hard by the Temple Mount, overlooking and menacing the Holy City. The garrison was reduced to extremity for want of provisions. It offered to capitulate. Had it been merely a Syrian stronghold, an emblem of Syrian dominion, the garrison might have been withdrawn long before; but it was the refuge of men especially hated by their fellow-countrymen, who dreaded the fate that might be in store for them. Nothing worse happened to them, however, than what had happened to an idolatrous population in other places. They were all turned out, and after the usual ceremonies of purification, a joyful and orthodox population took possession of the citadel.

All its high towers were thrown down. It became a Jewish fortress, in which Jewish soldiers had their barracks and stored their arms. Its name, Akra, derived from the Greek word Acropolis, was laid aside, if not forgotten. It resumed its Persian name of Bira, or Baris, which meant simply The Fort.

On the Temple Mount, now strongly fortified, Simon built himself another house, in which he might reside while in the city. He made his son John general-in-chief, and allowed him to reside at Gezer.

Simon, though strict in all observance of the law, lived in considerable magnificence and luxury. The appointments

[1] Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. v.

of his table, and the perfection of his feasts are said to have excited the admiration of the Greeks. His countrymen erected a column in his honor on Mount Zion, on which were inscribed in Hebrew characters the events of his long life.

Demetrius II., having settled with Jonathan the affairs of Judea, departed on a madcap expedition against the Persians. He left his brother Antiochus Sidetes to govern Jerusalem during his absence; but Demetrius was made prisoner by the Persians, and it was ten years before he returned.

Antiochus Sidetes was another son of Demetrius I., who had been hidden in the town of Side in Pamphylia. As soon as he found himself possessed of power he announced that he was determined to rebuild the kingdom of his fathers, and to drive out Tryphon, the contemptible usurper who had dishonored their throne.

By his valor and capacity he re-established for ten years the vigorous rule of Seleucus Nicanor at Antioch, and when the strength of his moribund kingdom revived, the idea of restoring Syrian supremacy in Palestine revived also.

Antiochus Sidetes, when he began his reign, prudently made friends with Simon, and accepted his assistance in putting down Tryphon; but when he found himself firmly seated on his throne he quarrelled with his ally, and sent to him an envoy named Athenobius, a councillor, with a message, charging him with usurpations, with having captured the Syrian citadel at Jerusalem, and Joppa and Gezer, for which he paid no compensation, and with having despoiled and maltreated Syrian subjects. He was enjoined to give up the places he had taken, to pay the arrears of tribute due by them to Syria, and to repair all the damage he or his troops had done to Syrians. In default of this it was demanded that he should pay immediately to Antiochus a thousand talents.

Simon defended himself as best he could. Israel, he said, had only taken back its own. Joppa and Gezer were cities that had ravaged Judea, and the Jews had made re-

prisals. He would consent to pay at most one hundred talents.

Athenobius greatly incensed the king by reporting this answer, and describing in connection with it what he had seen of the wealth and luxury of Simon.[1]

Antiochus upon this, resolved on war, and sent a large army into Judea commanded by Cendebæus, a native of Hyrcania, who at once began to ravage the country. He quartered his army in an intrenched camp near Modin, believing himself protected by a mountain torrent then swollen into a broad and rapid stream. Simon had intrusted his army to his son John, who now proved himself worthy of his heroic lineage. He collected an army, in which, for the first time, there was seen a small force of Jewish cavalry. He crossed the torrent, defeated Cendebæus, burnt his tents, and plundered his baggage. After this victory he received the surname of Hyrcanus, having defeated the Hyrcanian.

It was a splendid victory, but difficulties with Antiochus were only postponed. Simon died almost at the moment of his son's triumph, and his death was a shameful domestic tragedy. His son-in-law Ptolemy, the son of Haboub (from his name he was probably of Arabian descent), was a wretch whom he had made governor of Jericho. It is believed that this man entered into some compact or alliance with Antiochus, or Cendebæus; at any rate, he resolved on killing the old high-priest and his sons, and on assuming their authority.

His crime was like that by which Agamemnon perished, as we are told in the Odyssey. Simon, notwithstanding his advanced age, paid yearly visits of inspection to his numerous cities. He went to Jericho in February, 135 B.C., accompanied by his two youngest sons, Judas and Mattathiah. Ptolemy, instead of entertaining them in the city, met them at a little fortress called Dok, where he commonly resided. There he made them a great feast, in the height of which he and his soldiers fell upon their guests, and slew all of

[1] 1 *Cf.* Renan, vol. v.

them. Assassins were at the same time sent to Gezer to murder John Hyrcanus, and a party was despatched to Jerusalem that fellow-conspirators there might secure the city. But a man who had escaped made such speed to carry warning to John Hyrcanus, that not only was he prepared to arrest and execute the murderers when they arrived, but he forestalled the messengers Ptolemy had despatched to Jerusalem. They found the gates closed, and the city on the alert.

If Ptolemy had been in league with Antiochus, he reaped no fruit from his treachery. The king disclaimed any participation in his crime, and refused him countenance or protection. He shut himself up in a small fort near Jericho, where he was besieged by John Hyrcanus; who, however, did not take the place, but after a short time, drew off his army. It is doubtful whether he was influenced by finding that Antiochus was about to take advantage of his struggle with Ptolemy, to invade Judea, or whether Ptolemy induced him to retreat by placing his aged mother and two brothers on the walls and threatening to torture them in the sight of the Jewish army, if the siege was not abandoned at once. It is said that the brave mother exhorted her son John to disregard her sufferings, which for her country's sake she was willing to endure. John's retreat did not save the lives of his mother and his brothers. They were murdered by Ptolemy, who, despairing of help from Antiochus, fled to Philadelphia (known in old times as Rabbath Ammon), and no more is recorded of him in history.

John Hyrcanus, without any opposition, succeeded his father as high-priest and prince in Jerusalem. From that time the hereditary succession of the Asmonean family to the dignity and power of high-priest was established until 35 B.C., when it was set aside by Herod.

Antiochus Sidetes before long laid siege to Jerusalem, which made a vigorous defense, but finally, reduced by famine, was forced to make terms. Something like good feeling was promoted on both sides by the generosity of

Antiochus, who, when the Jews requested a few days' truce that they might celebrate their Passover, not only granted what they asked, but sent them animals with gilded horns for sacrifice. When peace was made, he asked no harder terms than he had done before the war, in the message that he sent to Simon by Athenobius, except that Syrian garrisons were to be replaced in all Judean strongholds, while the Jews were to have liberty to live after the laws of their fathers. John offered to pay five hundred talents to be relieved from the necessity of admitting foreign soldiers into garrison. This proposal was accepted. He paid three hundred talents at once, and two hundred he is said to have obtained by excavations into the tomb of David. Hostages were given to Antiochus, among them John's own son. The walls of Jerusalem were again thrown down, and King Antiochus retired, after having, it is said, made sacrifices in the Temple according to the forms of Jewish worship. At any rate it is certain that he and John Hyrcanus remained fast friends. John received him with great magnificence when he afterwards revisited Jerusalem, and accompanied him with a body of Jewish troops when he set forth on a great expedition against the Parthians, who ten years before had taken Demetrius prisoner and held him in captivity until, on the approach of Antiochus, his brother, they set him free, thinking he might make a diversion in their favor, by taking arms against one whom he must consider a usurper.

Antiochus Sidetes died in battle, and Demetrius II. resumed his crown. He was never popular, however, among his subjects, and for many years after this the history of the decline and fall of the Syrian empire is an entanglement of changes, crimes, and weakness, small successes and overwhelming defeats, anarchy, domestic crimes and a continual succession of pretenders. Occasionally we see through the confusion the iron hand of Rome.

Already John Hyrcanus had invoked the intervention of that mighty power to induce Antiochus Sidetes before his Parthian campaign to restore him Joppa and Gamara, and

Antiochus, unwilling to enter into any controversy with the Roman State, had given back the cities.

Judea, small as it was and hedged in by hostile States on every side, was now of more importance in the world's eyes than it had been since the days of Solomon; for, after the death of Antiochus Sidetes in his Parthian campaign, the situation of John Hyrcanus changed. "He became," says M. Renan, "a free man, and although he had as yet no royal title, he had a degree of liberty of action that no Jewish *ethnarch* had ever had before him. Judea had at last a sovereign who could act for Jewish interests alone." Nominally she might still be the vassal of Syria, and this nominal vassalage was to continue until the rule of Rome should begin. "Judea was too small to escape absorption by one of the great powers contending for the dominion of the East, but the mad experiment of Antiochus Epiphanes would never be renewed."

John Hyrcanus in the later years of his life, was possessed by the spirit of imperialism, by zeal for political expansion, and for propagandism by conquest. Judas, Jonathan, and Simon had been patriots acting on the defensive, John Hyrcanus was a conqueror. His countrymen, when they ceased to fight in the interest of their religion, laid down their arms, and in the latter part of his reign John Hyrcanus had to employ mercenaries. These were paid partly from money poured by the faithful into the Treasury of the Temple, and partly, it was believed, from secret hoards laid up in the tomb of David.

Judea was encircled by hostile populations. On the north were the Samaritans, her hereditary foes. On the south were the Idumeans, or Edomites, expelled from their own country by the Nabathean Arabs.

John Hyrcanus first attacked the Samaritans. Impelled by ardent zeal, he took Sichem and Mount Gerizim, and destroyed their Temple. He aspired to conquer Ituræa, the country lying northeast from Palestine, but before he did so he attacked the Idumeans. He conquered them and compelled the whole male population to accept circum-

cision. And thus, *nominally*, the descendants of Esau and Jacob became at last united. As the Idumeans were thenceforward accounted to be Jews, Herod and his family, though of an alien race, were officially numbered among the "seed of Abraham." Not that true Jews ever recognized Herod, or any other Idumean, as being more than a "half Jew."

John Hyrcanus in the course of his quarrels and his conquests was opposed at one time by Ptolemy Lathyrus, King of Egypt, who (probably under Roman influence) interfered in Syrian affairs, but the Queen Mother Cleopatra (not the Cleopatra so well known in history) was partial to the Jews, and had placed two Jewish generals, sons of the Onias who built the Temple at Leontopolis, at the head of her army.

A revolt broke out in Samaria which caused John Hyrcanus to invade it a second time. A little more than one hundred years before the birth of Christ the city of Samaria was taken, after a year's siege, and utterly destroyed.

But the wars and successes of John Hyrcanus concern us far less than the rise of parties in the Jewish Church, which took place at this period. The experiment, afterwards repeated in Scotland under the Covenanters, and in New England under the Puritans, of making the Law of Moses supreme in civil and domestic life, was tried in Palestine, and as interpreted by tradition its yoke must have been intolerable. Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes divided the nation. In the end the quarrel between the first two did much to eat out the heart of true piety in the Jewish nation. Religious feeling was frittered away in zealous adherence to observances; the spirit of the nation ceased to be that of the men who so fervently poured out their hearts in prophecy or in sacred song.

Up to this time the Jewish Church had been divided between the Chasidim and the Hellenists. One of these parties had been now extinguished. Men might be Philhellenes, admirers of Greek philosophy, learning, or institu-

tions, but no Jew dared to style himself a Hellenist, or to abandon the God of his fathers for the worship of idols.

From the "History of the Jews" by Professor H. Graetz, a book written mainly for Jewish readers, I will make some large quotations and abridge his account of the Pharisees and Sadducees at this period. I do so at some length because the subject is of importance, and the information afforded us is, so to speak, at first hand.

Professor Graetz, after speaking of the Assideans (Chasidim) and the Essenes, says: "There arose a division among the pious, and a national party separated itself from the Essenes, which did not avoid public life, but took an active part in public affairs. The members of this numerous sect began at this time to bear the name of Pharisees. But this sect, the very soul and centre, as it were, of the nation, having above all things at heart the preservation of Judaism in the exact form in which it had been handed down to men, insisted upon all political undertakings, all public transactions, every national act, being tried by the standard of religion. To these demands, however, those who stood at the head of military or diplomatic affairs . . . would not, or could not reconcile themselves. Thus a third party was formed — that of the Sadducees. At what precise period opposition between these parties began to show itself is uncertain. . . . According to one account the adverse parties first appeared in the days of Jonathan. . . . The mass of the nation was inclined to Phariseeism, and it was only in the national leaders that its peculiarities became marked. The Pharisees derived their name from the fact of their *explaining* the Scriptures in a peculiar manner, and of deriving new laws from this new interpretation. . . . The individual and the State were to be ruled alike by the laws and customs of their fathers. Every deviation from this principle appeared to the Pharisees as treason to all that was most precious and holy. . . . The third dogma of the Pharisees (the second being their belief in immortality and the resurrection) was concerning the importance and all-embracing influence of religious injunctions. In a

nation whose breath of life was religion, many customs, whose origin was lost in the dim twilight of the past, had taken their place by the side of the written Law. If these ordinances were not found in the books of the written Law, they were ascribed to the great teachers of the age of Ezra. All these unwritten customs gained an extraordinary degree of importance from the dangers that Judaism had encountered, and the victories that it had achieved. The people had risked in behalf of these very customs their property and their lives. . . . This devotion to outward forms and ceremonies by no means excluded the religion of the heart. The Pharisees in those days were acknowledged to be moral, chaste, temperate, and benevolent. . . . Even their rivals, the Sadducees, could not but bear witness to the fact that 'they denied themselves in this life, but would hardly receive a reward in a future world.'

"The party of the Sadducees, so sharply opposed to the Pharisees, pursued a national political policy. It was composed of the Judean aristocracy, the brave soldiers, the generals, and the statesmen who had acquired wealth and authority at home, or who had returned from foreign embassies, all having gained, from closer intercourse with the outer world and other lands, freer thought, and more worldly views. They formed the kernel of the Asmonean following, which in peace or war faithfully served its leaders. This sect also doubtless included some Hellenists who, shrinking from the desertion of their faith, had returned to Judaism. . . . The national interests of the Judean community were placed by the Sadducees above the Law. Burning patriotism was their ruling sentiment, and piety occupied but the second place in their hearts. . . . Oppressed by the abundance of the religious ordinances, they would not admit their general applicability, or the obligation of keeping them. . . . They laid down the following rule: That only the ordinances which appeared clearly expressed in the Pentateuch were binding. Those which rested upon oral tradition, or had sprung up at various times had a subordinate value, and could not claim to be

inviolable. Still, they could not help occasionally recognizing the value of traditional interpretations.

"In their interpretation of the judicial and penal laws, as well as of the rules of ritual, the Sadducees were much more severe than the Pharisees. The law about 'an eye for an eye,' etc., they insisted should be literally carried out. The Pharisees required only pecuniary compensation. The two sects disagreed about many points of ritual, as, for instance, the date of the Feast of Weeks, the ceremonies to be used at the Feast of Tabernacles, the manner of kindling incense on the Great Day of Atonement, etc., etc.

"But in spite of the relief which their less stringent views gave the people, burdened every hour of the day with religious observances, the Sadducees were not popular. The feeling of the time was against laxity and in favor of strict religious observance. . . . They never gained the heart of the public, and it was only by force and authority that they were able to make their principles prevail. At this period religious sentiment in the Jewish nation was so active that it gave birth to a religious order which far surpassed even the Pharisees in strictness and painful scrupulousness."[1]

This was the order of the Essenes, of which I must be permitted to say a few words.

"The Essene," says M. Renan, "was a monk who had his rules and his superiors, his novitiate, his monastery, and his vows. All men of the community called each other brethren. They at first admitted men only, and discouraged marriage, but they sometimes brought up children in habits that would dispose them to join their rule. The only penalty inflicted for violating the discipline of the order was expulsion, but it was remarked that expulsion was almost always followed speedily by sudden death. Their dress was in form like that of other people, but it was entirely white.

"All goods were in common; those who united themselves

[1] See "The History of the Jews," by Professor H. Graetz, vol. ii. chapter i., pp. 17–25.

with the Order gave it all their property. Their common interests were confided to managers of well known thrift. The order prescribed for the daily life of the brethren was carefully laid down, and in all respects resembled the rules enforced in a monastery.

"At sunrise they had prayer; then the brethren were set to various tasks by their superiors; after that they came together for ablutions; then came the mid-day meal; then more hours of labor; and then supper.

"Their most anxious care was for cleanliness and decency. These matters were indeed carried to what seems, even to us, a puerile extreme. To expose the person to the light was considered to insult the eye of God; and minute precautions were taken when they performed their ablutions, — which in some cases was many times a day.

"Though marriage was at first prohibited, after a while a few women were admitted to the Order, under severe restrictions.

"The Essenes never severed their connection with the Temple at Jerusalem; but, rejecting bloody sacrifices, they sent only other offerings. They were in consequence excluded from the more sacred courts of the Temple, but the holiness of their lives protected them from any other persecution. It was popularly said of them that 'they were the best of men.'

"Their food in the monastery was prepared according to strict rules of cleanliness. At meal time after the bath of purification, they met together in a hall where no profane person, except by rare and especial permission, could be received. Before entering this hall each man cast about him a mantle of white linen. Silently and reverently they arranged themselves along the table. Before each man stood a loaf, and a bowl containing his food for the day. The priest prayed before they ate, and no man might taste anything before the prayer. After the repast the priest prayed again. At the beginning and at the end, the brothers each returned thanks to God who giveth food to man. When this was over they laid aside their linen

mantles, and returned to their work until the evening. This rite, far more than any other, impressed those who sought acquaintance with the habits of the Essenes, among whom we may number the Jewish writers Philo and Josephus. Any stranger permitted to be present was struck with awe and respect. Their hall seemed a real temple; the meal a religious service; no clamor or noise was heard. The brethren, if compelled to speak, did so gravely in whispers.

"They did not all live in the monastery. Some resided in Jerusalem, where there was even a gate called by their name. They were bound to exercise hospitality in all places, and on all occasions, to their brethren.

"Besides the Bible, which was read and commented upon every day, they possessed books of their own, in which the names of the angels played a conspicuous part."[1]

They interpreted dreams, and were accredited with second sight, and the power to make predictions. M. Renan thinks that the Book of Enoch, so full of angelology, may have been one of the volumes held so precious that each Essene on his initiation swore to preserve them with as much care and secrecy as he did the names of the angels.

What we know of the Essenes comes from Philo, an Alexandrian Jew, and from Josephus. Neither of these writers makes any mention of a Messianic hope being cherished by the Essenes, but this may be accounted for by the scorn and dislike with which Greeks and Romans would have received the idea that out of obscure Judea was to come forth the prince who should found a kingdom which would supersede their own divinities and spread over the world. Both writers aimed to present the Essenes to non-Jewish eyes in the most favorable light, so they suppressed whatever might have seemed to a Greek or a Roman unintelligible or ridiculous.

The Asmonean princes were originally Pharisees, and owed their elevation to their piety and their ardent zeal

[1] See Renan's "History of the People of Israel,' vol. v., chapter vi., pp. 49-56.

for Judaism; but as time went on, the attractions of "good society," liberal education, and the fashion of the day, attached them to the Sadducees.

Besides subtle attractions, an incident occurred which threw John Hyrcanus out of the party of the Pharisees and into that of their rivals. His luxury and proud bearing were resented by his old companions. His people liked him no longer. Many thought he ought to separate spiritual from temporal power. They were well disposed to him as a military chief, but they did not find him noble enough for the high-priesthood. He was not of the family of Zadok, and many considered that his assumption of the high-priesthood was illegal.

At a magnificent repast given by him to the leading Pharisees, when he asked if he had ever done anything contrary to the law, a man named Eleazar started up, and told him to his face that it was reported and believed by many, that his mother had once been a prisoner in the hands of the Syrians, and therefore, as the son of a slave-woman, he was not legally entitled to hold his high position. All the guests were indignant at Eleazar for this audacious impertinence, but when John Hyrcanus wished to have him put to death, they could not be persuaded to approve the punishment. John Hyrcanus resented this. The story that his mother had been once made captive at Modin was proved to have no foundation, but the Sadducees, delighted at the quarrel, declared that Eleazar had only said what all men in his party in their hearts believed.

This led John Hyrcanus to join the Sadducees. Forthwith he opposed the strict discipline which the Pharisees were endeavoring to impose as a proper sequel to the Law. This made him still more unpopular, as the people sided with the Pharisees. His sons adhered to the same party as their father, and were never national favorites. The court came to be considered a place profane, where things forbidden elsewhere were allowed.

CHAPTER XII.

THE JEWISH SIBYL.[1]

WE see from the account of the Essenes in the last chapter, that some Jews, even in the days when ceremonial observances were rigidly enforced by law, sought to substitute offerings, hymns of praise, and purity of heart and person for sacrifices. The spirit of Essenism was not unlike the spirit of Christianity, and when in after years, a disciple of Jesus met with an Essene, they may surely have recognized a bond of brotherhood.

Nevertheless, not one word in all the Christian literature of the first and second centuries of our era makes any mention of the Essenes. Direct communication between Christianity and Essenism is more than doubtful, but their resemblance in many points is great.

Pliny, who had some knowledge of this Jewish sect as an object of curiosity, passed judgment on it with the practical common-sense of a man of the world. He said it was a society that could not hold together for any length of time. "It had formed a little short-lived Paradise for itself." But he added that nothing could be said against it, except that respect for the human body was carried to a degree of puerility. And, he concluded, it was probable that its members in their community led very happy lives.

The number of the Essenes was reckoned at about four thousand. In the first century of the Christian era they lived chiefly in the neighborhood of Engaddi, on the borders of the Dead Sea. Pliny considered them religious

[1] For the substance and even largely for the words of this chapter I am indebted to my own translation of vol. v., chapters vi. and ix. of M. Renan's " Histoire du Peuple d'Israel."

lunatics; Dio Chrysostom spoke of them as utopian theorists; Philo and Josephus were proud of them, as fellow-countrymen who had realized on earth a life of perfection. In the days of persecution during the Roman Empire, some of the Essenes were confounded with the Christians, and endured martyrdom with admirable courage; and some traces of the sect could be found as late as the third century.

We turn now to Egypt, where the tolerance of the Ptolemies spared the Jews the terrible experiences that their brethren in Palestine passed through triumphantly in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. The Jews in Egypt during that time were on good terms with the government, and often filled important posts, especially in the army. But, although they had their own Temple at Leontopolis, they continued to send offerings to Jerusalem, and to go thither on pilgrimage. The Jews in Palestine and the Jews in Egypt never ceased to keep up friendly relations. Yearly the Jews of Jerusalem invited their brethren in Egypt to come and celebrate with them the Feast of the Purification of the Temple; a blank form for this invitation was kept, and the date inserted from year to year.

Trade, morals, religion, and literature united the Jews of Egypt and Palestine. Books that came forth in Judea were promptly translated into Greek for the use of the Jews in Alexandria. Sometimes Greek writers made additions to Hebrew books, as in the case of the Book of Esther, to which a large supplement may be found in the edition inserted in the Apocrypha. The Second Book of Maccabees seems to have been written by a Jew in Egypt. We have, indeed, no Hebrew text of some of the Hagada (or stories with a purpose) included in the Apocrypha, as, for instance, "Susanna and the Elders," or "Bel and the Dragon." Another decidedly apocryphal work was called the Third Book of the Maccabees. It does not accord with known history. It was never included by the Latin Church among the canonical Scriptures, but it found its place in the Greek canon.

The Hagada, or parabolic narrative, was a style of composition much esteemed amongst the Jews. The teaching of Jesus when He addressed the multitude was almost always uttered in the form of parables. Some modern critics think that one at least of our canonical books, — the story of Jonah, — is as much a parable as the story of the Prodigal Son.

Although by Greek rulers in Egypt the Jews were trusted as valuable subordinates, they were never popular among the inhabitants of Alexandria. Many pamphlets were written against them. One by Apion was, in the first century of the Christian era, forcibly refuted by both Philo and Josephus.

It seems to me that my readers might here find interesting some account of the Sibylline Books, — Jewish books, the first of which was written at this period, — not the early Sibylline Books, whose story, in connection with Roman history, is universally known.

There appeared in Alexandria, about the time of which we write, a Jewish poem in whose ideas the influence of the Palestinian taste for Apocalypse was deeply marked, while the form was entirely original. Its author feigned that the Sibyl, the perpetual prophetess of the Gentile world, had dictated her prophecies to him. There circulated already short poems supposed to contain the predictions of the Cumæan and Erythræan Sibyls. The Jewish imitator adopted the same style and the same rhythm, and, the better to deceive the credulous, scattered through his text some of those predictions popularly believed to have come down from prophetesses in remote antiquity.

It was about the year 140 B. C. that the most ancient and important of these singular productions made its appearance in Alexandria. The Erythræan Sibyl was the prophetess chosen by the Jewish author to address to the world his warnings and reproaches. The plan of the book was a sort of universal history, the nation of the Jews being its centre. It was a singular mixture of the Bible and Greek fable. The Titans and the sons of Kronos (or Saturn) are

mixed up with stories of the building of the Tower of Babel. Bitterly does the Sibyl speak of the empire of the Romans, then extending itself over the known world. She represents its power as terrible, destructive, rapacious, and oppressive. Of all empires it is the harshest, the most iniquitous, and the most impious. Its luxury, its abominable modes of life, the seeds of vice it scattered in its train, and its haunts of profligacy were calculated, she thinks, to debauch the whole world and especially to influence the young. "But the people of God will reign at last;" she cries, "they will guide all mortals on the path to life. The judgments of God will fall upon the Gentile world with blood and ruin."

The ideas of the Jewish Sibyl were pure and elevated. She apostrophized Greece as a sister who had gone astray. She tells her that all her woes have come to her through idolatry, the fatal invention of wicked kings in the old days.

"Oh! Greece!" she cries, "why hast thou put thy trust in men, in mortal princes who could not themselves escape the doom of death?[1] Why dost thou make vain offerings to the dead? Why sacrifice to idols? Who has put error into thy mind? Who has led thee to attempt to hide thyself from the face of the great God? Ah! rather revere the name of the Father of all things; let His name be not unknown to thee! Proud kings reigned over the Greeks for fifteen hundred years, and they introduced evils amongst men, corrupting them by the worship of many idols of gods who have suffered death, and they have filled your fancies with vain things. But when the anger of God shall be heavy upon you, then will ye recognize the face of the Great God. All human beings, with groanings, lifting their hands to the vast heavens, will begin to invoke the Great God, to pray for His protection, and to seek how they may be delivered from His anger."

[1] The poet believes the gods of Greece are deified heroes or ancient kings. This account is abridged from the ninth chapter of vol. v. of Renan's "History of the People of Israel": "On the Jewish Sibyl."

Judaism, thinks the prophetess, is the lamp which will preserve the light of truth in the world. The Sibyl describes the servants of the Great God, as pious men dwelling peaceably in Judea and worshipping in the Temple.

"Living in righteousness and in the observance of the law of the Most High, they will live perfectly happy in their towns and wealthy villages. Exalted by Him who is Immortal, they will become prophets of the human race. They will bring to it great joy. To them alone has the Great God given wisdom, faith, and good thoughts in their hearts. Preserved from vain errors, they no longer revere images of the gods, the work of men's hands, fashioned in gold, in bronze, in ivory, in wood, in stone, in clay, works painted in scarlet, representing animals, and all else that mortals, led astray in their madness, now worship and adore. But they will raise to heaven their pure hands, which in the morning, rising from their beds, they will purify with water; they will honor God always, the Mighty and Immortal, and after Him their parents; besides which, more than all other men, they will ever remember the sanctity of the nuptial bed."

The poet who speaks as the Sibyl, thinks the end of the world is at hand. "Of that day and of that hour knoweth no man." Even St. Paul expected that the kingdom of his Lord on earth would soon be triumphantly established.

"Then," cries the Sibyl, "wars shall end. Then all the isles and all the cities shall say: 'How dear are men to the Immortal!' . . . And out of their mouths shall come sweet songs: 'Come and let us fall prostrate on the earth, and pray to the King Immortal — God, the Great, and the Most High.'"

Then shall the faithful encourage each other, saying: "For seven years let us go to and fro upon the earth, gathering up all murderous weapons, bucklers, javelins, helmets, arrows, — all things that slay men. Let us make of them great bonfires. For seven years no oak wood need be cut in the forests to keep up the flame."

The judgment of God will be preceded by terrible woes,

but there will come at length an age of perfect happiness. "Then there will arise a kingdom which will last forever, and extend over all nations upon earth. . . . All the roads that cross the plains, all the steep rocks, all the high mountains will be easy to cross in those days. Profound peace and happiness will reign upon the earth. . . . Then shall there be riches among men not acquired by injustice."

The subject is continued by the Sibyl almost in the very words of the prophecy of Isaiah: "Rejoice O Virgin! — tremble with happiness. He who created the heavens and the earth assures thee of eternal felicity. He will dwell with thee; to thee will belong immortal light. Wolves will eat grass with the lambs upon the mountains; leopards and kids will graze together; the wandering bear will lie down with the heifer. Lions, which now eat flesh, shall eat straw in the manger like the ox, and little children in chains shall lead them. Wild beasts shall walk over the land, and shall do no harm. Dragons shall sleep with children, and not hurt them, for the hand of God shall be over them."

These days will be preceded by signs and wonders in the heavens: such as men saw (or believed themselves to have seen) during the siege of Jerusalem; such as have been recorded by Roman writers as having preceded the death of Cæsar.

"And," adds the prophetess, "when all this shall have come to pass, you will remember me; and no one any longer will say I have been mad. They will call me the Great Prophetess of God."

But the crowning argument for Judaism was the Jewish life. Happy, honest, and cheerful, readily accepting even a position of inferiority, the Jews of Alexandria seemed to those about them men of wisdom, — philosophers of a practical, every-day kind. They avoided both the immorality of the Greeks and the meanness of the Egyptians. Their lives were pure, their aspect, like that of the early Christians, was meek and unobtrusive. Among the numerous portraits discovered in late years of men who lived in Egypt under

Ptolemaic or Roman rule, it would be easy to distinguish those of the Jews by something in their aspect tender, amiable, and confiding.

The Sibylline oracles of the Alexandrine Jews did not, however, make any great or immediate impression upon the heathen. They were very little read by the Hellenic population. But scattered seed can always find a corner of the earth in which to germinate. A hundred years later the same ideas were presented to Rome in an exquisite form by Virgil, in his Fourth Eclogue. Virgil is known to have studied in the Library of Alexandria; probably he there met with the prophecy of the Sibyl, but as her poet had borrowed almost word for word from the old Jewish prophets, the early Christians, better acquainted with the Old Testament than with the Sibylline Books, called Virgil the Christian poet, and believed that he had drawn inspiration straight from their Sacred Writings.

Nevertheless, the Sibyl was not overlooked by the faithful in the early ages. The magnificent Latin hymn *Dies iræ, dies illa*, classes her with David as a sacred poet, —

"Teste David cum Sibylla."

"And," adds M. Renan, concluding his remarks upon the utterances of the Sibyl, "her verses tell the truth. There is a judgment day of God, and an absolute standard of right and wrong. . . . The witness that we look for in heaven has an existence outside of ourselves. There is a future for humanity. All the pictures men have drawn of it are childish, and yet all utopias — all scholastic chimeras — are true at bottom;" that is, they have a foundation of truth."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LATER ASMONEANS.

AS the union of the offices of high-priest and sovereign had proved so very unpopular, John Hyrcanus on his deathbed conceived the idea of leaving his temporal sovereignty to a female regent, and the dignity of high-priest to his eldest son.

It had been all along understood by the nation that the arrangement by which one man held both offices might not be permanent. To the official titles of the earlier Asmonean Princes were always added the words "until a true Prophet shall arise."

More than one queen was at that time reigning successfully in the East, but the idea of accepting a female sovereign was not pleasing to the Jews. And when the young Judas, or Aristobulus, a successful warrior, brilliant, and popular, at the head of a large army, claimed all the dignities of his late father, he had little difficulty in getting both temporal and spiritual power into his hands. He imprisoned his mother, and her three younger sons; sparing only his brother Antigonus, whom he loved as his comrade and companion in arms.

The Pharisees who had hoped to regain power under the regency of a female sovereign, were furious against Aristobulus. They imputed to him every crime. They even said he left his mother to die of starvation in prison. Their enmity has left his character very obscure; for the Greeks, whose favor he courted, gave him high praise for his good government and moderation.

Soon after his accession he assumed the title of king, without, however, putting it on his coins, which bore only the inscription "Judas, high-priest and chief of the Senate

of the Jews." He associated with himself in his sovereignty his brother Antigonus, and they went forth together on another northern campaign. But exposure, fatigue, and an unhealthy climate brought severe illness on Aristobulus. He was forced to leave the army and retired to Jerusalem. Thither his brother Antigonus soon after came to report on his successful feats of arms against the Arabs. Palace intrigues were on foot against Antigonus. His brother's mind was poisoned against him. Aristobulus was persuaded to test his fidelity by ordering him to appear unarmed in his presence. This message was falsely reported to Antigonus, who was led to believe his brother wished to see him glittering in complete armor. As he approached the sick chamber, soldiers stationed in a dark corridor set on him, and slew him. Noise of the conflict reached the king, who, learning what was taking place, was so much affected that he at once had a violent hemorrhage, from the effect of which he died, calling himself to the last his brother's murderer.

Aristobulus left no children. His heir was his brother Jonathan, who bore the Greek name of Alexander. This young man had been no favorite with his father, who had sent him away from court to be brought up in Galilee, alarmed, it is said, by a prophecy that as prince and pontiff he should hereafter sit upon his father's throne.

He at once changed his Hebrew name Jonathan to Jannai, and is known in history as Alexander Jannæus. It is commonly said that his wife Salome, or Alexandra, was his brother's widow. This seems impossible, for, as he aspired to the high-priesthood, both Pharisees and Sadducees would have felt the law outraged if the high-priest had married any woman who had made a previous marriage.

Alexander Jannæus was twenty-two years old when he became King of the Jews, and he reigned twenty-seven or twenty-eight years. His death took place seventy-eight years before the Christian era. His reign was on the whole a successful one. He added to Judea all the former country of the Philistines and for a time subdued Moab and Gilead,

though his successes were not permanent in that direction. He seems to have laid to heart his father's plan, which was to extend Judea to the utmost limits of Palestine, thus occupying all the country that had been given originally to the Ten Tribes.

The idea in Ezra's time that no man of an alien race could be accounted a Jew, even if he conformed to Judaism and worshipped the Lord Jehovah, seems to have given way to a desire to make Jews (at least so far as Jewish rites could make them) of alien people. This Palestinian idea of proselytizing by force was very different from the growing zeal for proselytism by conviction, active at this time in Alexandria. Alexander Jannæus forced whole populations to submit to Jewish rites and account themselves Jews. His troops were chiefly mercenaries drawn from Cyprus and Asia Minor, as he did not dare to incorporate Syrians with Jews.

Though in the main his wars were attended with success, he sometimes failed, as when the Arabs enticed his army into a ravine, and utterly annihilated it, Alexander himself escaping with great difficulty.

An ex-king of Egypt at one time presumptuously marched his armies without permission through Judea, and ravaged the country on every side. He was opposed by Jewish generals sent to the assistance of Jannæus by the Egyptian queen Cleopatra, then reigning in Alexandria, and was forced to withdraw to Cyprus.

But while the whole heart of Alexander Jannæus was set on war and conquest, his kingdom was distracted by internal dissensions between Sadducees and Pharisees. Alexander leaned to the party of the Sadducees, and was in consequence highly unpopular with their rivals of the opposite faction.

His wife Salome, or Alexandra, was sister to Simon ben Shetach, the leader of the Pharisees. This man enjoyed much favor at court, and endeavored to make peace, though his efforts were unsuccessful. The Pharisees and their adherents, who, in broad terms, may be said to have

been a large majority of the nation, went so far as to treat their high-priest in public with indignity.

On one occasion, at the Feast of Tabernacles, it was his duty as high-priest to pour water from a golden ewer over the sacrifice upon the altar. This ceremony was considered an innovation on the Law of Moses by the Sadducees. Alexander in derision emptied the water on his own feet. Worshippers, who crowded the courts of the Temple on that day, carried the *loulab* (that is, a sort of bouquet composed of palms and the fruit and branches of the citron tree). These they hurled at the head of the high-priest as he descended from the altar, shouting the old scandal, that he was unworthy to exercise the priestly office since his grandmother had been a Syrian slave! Alexander Jannæus, exasperated beyond bearing, ordered his band of mercenaries to charge the crowd. The massacre was horrible. Josephus says six thousand Pharisees were left dead in the courts of the Temple. And Alexander had a screen, or partition wall, built up, which effectually precluded worshippers from doing more than gaze at the priests who officiated at the Altar of Sacrifice.

It was shortly after this that Alexander failed in an expedition against the Arabs. His schemes of conquest had absorbed all his thoughts, and he had not perceived that if he lost the hearts of his own countrymen the very life of the State would be sapped, and his power would become insecure. His people were so enraged against him, not only by his defeat but by his cruelties, that civil war broke out, which Josephus says lasted six years, and cost the lives of fifty thousand Jews. Thus after three generations the successors of the great Asmoneans had so far wrecked the edifice raised by the blood of their great ancestors, their noble sacrifices, and their incessant labors, that it is a marvel that it did not altogether fall.

The king with his mercenaries had now to encounter, not a foreign foe, but the Jewish people. At length, weary of the strife, Jannæus condescended to ask on what terms they would make peace with him. "That thou shalt die!"

was their fierce answer, and they summoned to their aid Demetrius III., King of Syria.

This prince at once responded to the call. He entered Palestine and defeated Jannæus, who took refuge in the mountains. But the bulk of the Jewish people became alarmed when they forecast the consequences of the entrance of a Syrian king into Jerusalem. They took pity on their sovereign, their co-religionist, and their countryman. Six thousand Jewish soldiers, who had joined the army of Demetrius, went over to the standard of Jannæus. The Syrian king was disgusted by the fickleness and factional fury of his allies. He retired with his army, and left the Jews to settle their disputes among themselves.

Then the civil war went on. Jannæus having stormed a city in which eight hundred Pharisees of rank and influence had taken refuge, brought them as prisoners to Jerusalem, where he had them crucified. As they hung upon their crosses it is said that their wives and children were put to death before their eyes, while the king and his concubines, to whom he was giving a banquet, looked triumphantly on the dreadful scene. This atrocious deed earned for Jannæus a Greek surname — Thrakidas — meaning at once a "torturer" and an "executioner."

The night after this atrocity eight thousand Jews quitted Jerusalem, making their way to Egypt or beyond Jordan. They never returned to Judea during the life of Jannæus, who continued to wage war with the surrounding nations; but "peace reigned" in Jerusalem, the stillness and peace which arise sometimes from despair.

The city of Pella beyond Jordan, peopled in the days of Alexander the Great by a colony of Macedonian veterans, refused to give up its national worship for that of the Jews. It was levelled with the ground, and the success of the arms of Jannæus against the heathen seemed in the eyes of his subjects almost to atone for the crimes he was charged with nearer home.

The Jewish State, as enlarged by John Hyrcanus and Alexander Jannæus, was small according to our ideas of an

independent kingdom, but it was the largest that sprang into birth from the dismemberment of the Seleucid Empire. It comprised Galilee and Samaria, Judea, southern Judea, or Idumea, the country beyond Jordan, the land of the Philistines, and all places on the sea-coast from Carmel to Egypt, except Ascalon. Flourishing Greek cities, both on the coast and inland, had been destroyed by the mercenaries of Jannæus; the effect of the Macedonian conquest was nullified in one third of Syria.

An opinion grew up among the Jews that to the descendants of Mattathiah was reserved the privilege of delivering Judea from the yoke of Syria; that God would not favor any man who attempted to intrude into their work; that priests especially had nothing to do with the mission of deliverance, unless they were of the Asmonean family.

In those days the First Book of Maccabees seems to have been composed. It contains an account of the Holy War, which lasted about forty years, from the revolt of Mattathiah to the death of Simon. The same author also compiled annals of the reign of John Hyrcanus; but these have been lost. The First Book of Maccabees shows gleams of the old literary genius of the Jewish people. It was written in Hebrew, but has been preserved for us only in a Greek translation. The narratives it contains may have been in part founded upon earlier records, but the author seems to have relied chiefly upon oral tradition, — narratives taken down from the lips of last survivors of the great struggle. Occasionally adventures are told in fragments of rude verse; like the songs of the Scalds or the ballads of border warfare. But what continually surprises us in this interesting and remarkable book "is," says M. Renan, "the good sense of its author, and the firm grasp of his thought. The success of the war of independence he attributes to the courage and skill of the Maccabean brothers. . . . His liking for military details denotes a soldier. The motive that makes a man brave death is the feeling that he dies for his people, and for the laws of his fathers. . . . The stain which the

least recoil from danger would stamp upon his fame holds him up when otherwise he might be tempted to falter."[1]

The little Jewish kingdom under Alexander Jannæus had no wish to be thought behindhand in marks of civilization proper to a Greek State. Great buildings, carefully constructed, were multiplied in and around Jerusalem, and it is possible that the cost of these constructions may (as in the case of Solomon and Herod) have been one of the causes of discontent that troubled the last years of an unquiet reign. The white marble monument erected at Modin to Mattathiah, Judas Maccabæus and his brethren was so lofty that although fifteen miles from the sea-coast, its gleam could be seen by ships as they drew near to Joppa. It became, indeed, the fashion for wealthy Jews to erect beautiful tombs in the valley of the Kedron, and in other environs of Jerusalem. Many of these sepulchres may still be seen.

We are not sorry to learn that the latter years of Alexander Jannæus were sad, and full of disappointment. He was only forty-nine when he died, but he was worn out by fatigue and dissipation. By way of distraction from present fears and haunting memories, he became a drunkard, and self-indulgence brought him to his end. The queen, Salome, or Alexandra, was esteemed a person of rigid piety, and she was strongly attached to the Pharisees. She had always censured the harsh treatment of their party by her husband; and in his last hours of apprehension and distress he fancied she might propitiate the popular sect, and save the dynasty. He therefore conferred the royal power upon her, after his death, and left his eldest son Hyrcanus the high-priesthood.

Alexandra was a woman who could well play the part assigned to her. She loved power almost with frenzy, and she believed that in the exercise of it women were often more skilful than men. Her chief care was to gain her ends. Nor was she always scrupulous as to means of attaining them. As soon as she was established on the throne

[1] History of the People of Israel, vol. v.

all places of power and trust were given to the Pharisees. Well satisfied with this, they changed their opinion of Alexander Jannæus. They spoke of him as a brilliant warrior and a great sovereign, and decreed him a magnificent funeral. But a year later the populace celebrated the anniversary of his death with rejoicings.

Alexandra reigned nine years in peace. She had borne Alexander Jannæus two sons. Hyrcanus, the elder, who succeeded his father as high-priest, was a weak prince. His private life was irreproachable, but he was not fitted to fill a public post in troubled times. His more active and capable younger brother, Aristobulus, was allowed to take no part in public affairs.

The Pharisees finding themselves in power, appeared almost satisfied, nor did the Sadducees utter any complaints. Alexandra wisely abstained from persecution. Her great desire was to enforce religious observances, and to put everything back on the basis of the Law. To her own brother Simon ben Shetach she offered the presidency of the Sanhedrim, but he refused the office in favor of a man of great learning, Judah ben Tobai, who was one of those who had sought safety in Alexandria during the last years of Alexander Jannæus. This Judah, with the help of Simon and the support of Alexandra, undertook to reorganize the Supreme Council, whose Sadducean members were expelled. Courts of justice were re-established, religious observances were resumed, education was promoted by the establishment of schools, besides many other peaceful and praiseworthy reforms. But these were not sufficient to satisfy public sentiment; the most thorough-going section of the Pharisees insisted that the whole nation, in its habits of domestic life, should return to the strictest observance of the forms of Judaism; and sometimes the leaders did not hesitate to employ severe and arbitrary measures to enforce their views. They enlarged the workings of that system of tradition which in the end made the Law itself of no effect, as it grew and developed under succeeding generations. Many half-holidays and feast days that had been

abolished were now re-established and the laws of divorce were rendered more severe, so that a husband dissatisfied with his wife was compelled to consider whether he could afford to pay the alimony required for her support in case of separation.

Among the festivals revived by the Pharisees was the Feast of Lights, which was celebrated in connection with the Feast of Tabernacles. It was particularly popular because it threw discredit on the king who had childishly and recklessly profaned it. On the night succeeding the first day of the festival the western outer court of the Temple was brilliantly illuminated, and the populace crowded to the Holy Mount, with torches, music, songs of praise, and dancing. In the morning trumpets summoned the worshippers to assemble round the Pool of Siloam. There water was drawn in a golden ewer, carried to the Temple, and the libation profaned by Alexander Jannæus was performed.[1] The queen was very popular. She encouraged the people to follow out the strict rules laid down by the Pharisees, and she repealed all the ordinances of John Hyrcanus that were contrary to their traditions.

The Pharisees were of course not slow to take advantage of their new position. Especially they demanded the execution of those officers who had abetted Jannæus in his acts of cruelty. Diogenes, a great favorite with his master, and captain of his mercenaries, was given up to them, as well as a few others. Terror spread through the army. "The house of Alexander Jannæus," said the soldiers, "is given over to madness, since it destroys the very men who have given it strength at the risk of their lives."

Aristobulus, the younger son of Alexandra, put himself at the head of the discontented troops, and openly declared that if *he* were in power he would not permit his mother to follow such a line of conduct. In company with a party of officers he repaired to the palace. There they bitterly complained to the queen that they were delivered over to the mercy of men who wanted to slaughter them like sheep

[1] John vii. 37.

in the shambles. "If that was to go on," they said, "they would rather be disbanded. The enemies they had fought against under Jannæus — especially, king Hareth of Arabia — knew their value, and with him they would take service." The least they demanded was to be garrisoned in distant strongholds where they would find safety.

Aristobulus enforced these demands, and, in his mother's presence, insolently reproached the soldiers with having brought this state of things upon themselves by confiding the care of the kingdom to an ambitious woman. "As if," he said, "her husband had had no sons!"

Alexandra, under the pressure of necessity, yielded to the officers' demands. The mercenaries — chiefly Gauls and Cretans — were sent to garrison strong places in the provinces, but the three great fortresses, Hyrcania, Alexandrion, and Machærus, where the crown treasures were deposited, were placed in charge of troops known by the queen to be faithfully devoted to her. Aristobulus was given command of an army to act against a Syrian prince who was marching on Damascus.

Alexandra, though much occupied with questions of religion, did not neglect the secular cares of government. She kept up a body-guard of foreign troops, and awed the petty tyrants who governed the nations in the neighborhood of her own.

Tigranes, king of Armenia in those days, invaded Cœle-Syria and besieged Ptolemais (the town of Acre). Alexandra propitiated him by valuable presents, hoping thereby to prevent his entering Palestine. But the appearance of a Roman army in Armenia was much more effectual. Tigranes quitted Syria and returned to his own land.

Alexandra was by this time growing old (at least M. Renan considers her very old); though she probably was barely seventy. Aristobulus foresaw that after her death the Pharisees would be absolute masters in the State under his weak brother Hyrcanus, who would then be prince-pontiff, and entirely under their influence. He resolved on a revolutionary stroke, confiding his secret solely to his wife.

Leaving her in Jerusalem, and accompanied only by a servant, he made a tour among the fortresses where the old officers — his father's friends — were virtually imprisoned. They listened to him at once. All joined in his project. Alexandra, when told that her son had left Jerusalem, at once suspected his design, but she tried not to believe the things she feared. It soon, however, became plain that Aristobulus was preparing a *coup d'État.* The Pharisees who surrounded the queen urged her to seize his wife and children, and confine them as hostages in the Baris, which overlooked the Temple.

Meantime Aristobulus, surrounded by a cohort like a king, was on his march to Jerusalem. The elders and Hyrcanus pressed the queen to do something to stop him. It was in vain. Alexandra was near her end. She would only say: "Do what you will. You have the means. The nation is with you. Leave me in peace." They could get nothing more from her; her strength was exhausted. She died in the early months of the year 69 B.C. Anna and Simeon, of whom we read in the New Testament, were living in her day. She had ruled in comparative peace for nine years, but she ruined the Asmonean dynasty. Wise men held her responsible for the troubles which followed her death, and brought the rule of the Maccabees to a close with shame and sorrow.

Aristobulus assumed the title of king as soon as he was informed of his mother's death. He was confident of support from the troops scattered through the provinces; but at the same time his brother, Hyrcanus the high-priest, was proclaimed king, as Hyrcanus II., in Jerusalem. A battle between the brothers was fought near Jericho. The soldiers of Hyrcanus almost all deserted to Aristobulus. Hyrcanus himself sought refuge in the Baris, where he capitulated. His life was spared, but he was deprived of his dignity and left to enjoy his large fortune in idleness and seclusion. Want of occupation is apt to induce a weak man to engage in intrigues. Those in which Hyrcanus embarked brought into prominence a great Idumean family,

which was to play from that time forward a leading part in the history of the Jews.

Alexander Jannæus had appointed a certain Antipater, — probably a native of the city of Ascalon — to be Governor of Idumea. This man was one of those forcibly circumcised when the city in which he lived was conquered by John Hyrcanus. His son, also named Antipater, appears to have succeeded him as governor. About the time we have now reached, a son was born to this Antipater, well known to all of us as King Herod the Great.

Antipater was no zealous Jew, though he was one nominally. He cared little for religion, and his heart was not stirred by feelings of patriotism. His most intimate relations were with the Arabs — the Nabatheans, who dwelt in and around Petra. Their king, Hareth III.,[1] was his chief friend. He was resolved to make himself a great man in Judea. Under Aristobulus, who was active and enterprising, he foresaw that this would be difficult, if not impossible. The weak Hyrcanus would better serve his purpose. He persistently reminded him that he was the legitimate prince-pontiff, — a deposed sovereign. He made him believe that enemies were plotting against his life, and persuaded him at last to take refuge among the Arabs. There he put himself under the protection of Hareth, in the cliff city of Petra. Then Antipater induced Hareth to restablish Hyrcanus in his own dominions, on condition that when restored to power he should give back to the Arabs the cities that his father Jannæus had taken from them.

Aristobulus was attacked by Hareth and defeated, after which he shut himself up in the fortified precincts of the Temple. Jerusalem was divided into two factions. The siege of the Holy Mountain was begun. True Jews, indignant at such sacrilege, quitted Jerusalem and went down into Egypt.

At the Feast of the Passover, as the siege went on, the besieged in the Temple had no victims for sacrifice. They

[1] Hareth and Aretas are the same name.

appealed to their co-religionists to allow them to buy a lamb at any price, and the story goes that the mixed multitude of Sadducees and Arabs cruelly deceived them by allowing them to hoist over the wall into the Temple an unclean hog! The Arabs also drew a holy man named Onias from his place of retirement, and set him to curse Aristobulus and his followers, as Balaam had been employed by Balak to curse the children of Israel. But Onias made a prayer, reported by Josephus: "O God, King of the universe, since the men who here surround me are thy people, and those whom they besiege are thy priests, I pray thee not to hear their prayers against these men, and not to grant to these what they may ask thee against those."

For this prayer the man of God was stoned. He died a martyr.

Meantime, while this miserable, fratricidal war was in progress in what then seemed to historians a little insignificant corner of the earth, but which, now that nineteen centuries have passed away, is the spot beyond all others of most interest and importance to the civilized world, a mighty power was overrunning the East, breaking all things to pieces as it passed, but everywhere establishing peace and some show of order, justice, and law. "It was the beast," says Graetz, "with iron teeth, brazen claws, and a heart of stone, that should devour much, and trample the rest under foot, which came upon the Judean nation to drink its blood, eat its flesh, and suck its marrow."

Rome had exercised in the Far East considerable influence for more than a century. Now her legions came rolling over Syria like some terrible, irresistible crushing-machine, "to whose force," says M. Renan, "that of the armies of Assyria, Persia, or even of Alexander could not be compared. Mithridates had been swept away like straw upon a torrent. Pompey in Armenia was absolute master of a large part of Western Asia, . . . and now with a vigorous blow of his fist he was about to put an end to all the wretched divisions, local dynasties, and bands of foreign

mercenaries under which the Syrian Empire was perishing. Rome did not concern herself about the religion of her provinces; she left that question to everybody's choice, and in that was her great superiority. Rome was roughly reasonable, but yet reasonable after all. She would never have committed the folly of Antiochus Epiphanes."[1] Her view was that the Roman religion was best for Romans. But to the rest of the world she aimed to give peace and order, and to each man the privilege of living under the mighty protection of the State. "Thus Rome was to have dominion, whilst her provinces had peace, and by reason of her desire (sometimes beneficent, sometimes the reverse) of putting in her hand wherever anything seemed likely to become more orderly through her interference, she became at length the great police power of the world."

In the year 65 B.C. Pompey sent Æmilius Scaurus, his lieutenant, into Syria to report on the condition of affairs. All cities, districts, and dynasties which had formed part of the old empire of the Seleucidæ at once vied with one another in base endeavors to secure his favor. Both factions fighting round the Temple at Jerusalem sent him an ambassador. The envoy of Aristobulus offered him three hundred talents. Hyrcanus gave him only promises.[2]

Scaurus, both because of the money he received, and because he heard favorable reports of the talent and activity of Aristobulus, took his part. So soon as Hareth understood this he raised the siege of the Temple, and accompanied by Hyrcanus retreated to Petra, closely followed by Aristobulus and his men.

After this Aristobulus kept his kingdom in peace for a time, only employing his troops by sea and land in raids and piracies.

Two years later Pompey himself made a sort of police inspection of Syria, putting down and executing a number of petty local tyrants. When he reached Damascus ambassadors from Egypt and Antioch came to do him honor;

[1] Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. v.

[2] M. Renan thinks both offered four hundred talents.

there too, obedient to his summons, came the two rival claimants for the crown and high-priesthood of Judea.

Pompey, not having fully decided which of the Jewish brothers he preferred to favor, held a sort of trial of their claims. Aristobulus[1] and Hyrcanus were each provided with an advocate, but there was a third party maintained by an orator who insisted that Jewish public opinion was indifferent to both the contending parties; that the Jews had no preference for royalty, that their national custom was to obey their priests, and that the two rivals, although both of priestly race, were endeavoring to change the form of government, and deprive the people of their liberty.

On hearing this, Aristobulus put on a haughty air extremely distasteful to Pompey, who at once declared that he could not decide the cause upon the spot, but would visit Jerusalem as soon as he should have settled the affairs of the Nabatheans.

Meantime the behavior of Aristobulus was characterised by pique, petulance, and folly. Pompey lost patience with him. The Roman army had advanced as far as Jericho, and pitched a camp near there. One morning when Pompey, with great satisfaction, had received news of the overthrow and suicide of Mithridates, he resolved to set out without an hour's delay for Jerusalem. In truth he was anxious to complete the subjugation of Syria, and to hurry back to Rome, where he expected to receive the honor of a triumph. Half way upon his march to Jerusalem he met Aristobulus, coming to greet him with protestations of friendship, combined with an assurance that he both could and would admit a party of Romans into Jerusalem.

Pompey accepted his proposal and sent Gabinius, in company with Aristobulus, to take possession of the city.

[1] As a propitiatory offering Aristobulus sent Pompey a golden vine, worth, some writers say, five hundred talents. This was afterwards placed in the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in Rome. There Strabo saw it. From an inscription engraved on it in Greek it seemed to have been made in the time of Alexander Jannæus and placed among the treasures of the Temple.



POMPEY.

But Aristobulus had promised what he could not perform. Gabinius and his Romans were ill-received by the defenders of the Holy City. Enraged, he put Aristobulus under arrest, and Pompey, much chagrined by the delay, prepared for a regular siege of Jerusalem.

Pompey was a vain man, with a disposition to exaggerate his own importance, and he liked to interfere in troubles in which he need have taken no concern. The Pharisees in Jerusalem were not indisposed to receive the Romans; the party of Aristobulus made ready to resist them. Hyrcanus actively bestirred himself in opposition to his brother, by whose party the Temple was strongly fortified.

The city gates were thrown open on the approach of Pompey. His representative Piso arranged everything concerning his entry. The Roman general took up his quarters in the Asmonean Palace. But the soldiers of Aristobulus and a few priests shut themselves up in the sacred precincts, and the viaduct which connected the rest of the city with the Temple Hill was broken down. Hyrcanus did all he could to aid the labors of the Romans. The earthworks which they raised against the Temple Mount must have been a tremendous undertaking. Siege engines were brought from Tyre, and soon the Romans began to hurl immense blocks of stone against the Temple.

It had become a rule of warfare among the Jews since the days of Mattathiah and Judas Maccabæus, that on the Sabbath day they might repel an attack, and strike blow for blow, but they might not on that day hinder an enemy in any other way. The Romans, knowing this, got their engines into position on the Sabbath, and put them in use the next day.

During all this time, with great stones crushing on the roof of the Temple and its walls, the daily service was not interrupted, the morning sacrifice, and the evening sacrifice at the ninth hour (3 p. m.) never failed to be offered. On the day of the final assault the carnage round the Sanctuary was horrible, but those engaged in worship went on with their usual ceremonies.

It was October 10 in the year 63 B.C. that a wide breach was effected, and the Romans advanced to the assault of the Temple. A son of Sylla the dictator, with his cohort, was the first to mount. The party of Aristobulus fought desperately, but popular opinion was against them. As soon as they were overpowered, order in the city was restored.

This capture of a city of priests was not considered by Pompey's enemies in Rome a very difficult or glorious undertaking. There were even wits who made fun of the general's complacency in his triumph. But his conduct was marked by self-control which did him honor, though he had no opportunity to show great heroism on the occasion. Surrounded by his officers he entered the Temple. He went into the Holy Place, and gazed into the Sanctuary. To his surprise he saw no ass's head, nor any other symbol of worship. He saw the golden table for shew-bread; the seven-branched candlestick, the sacred vessels, the incense laid up in store, and in the Treasure Chambers piles of gold amounting to two thousand talents. He touched nothing, but respected everything connected with Jewish worship. The next day he had the Temple thoroughly cleansed, and ordered the daily service to be resumed.

Thus fell, in the year of Cicero's consulship, the royalty born of the heroism of the Asmoneans. The Jews were grateful to Pompey for his moderation. They never looked upon him as they had done on Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus, Ptolemy Philopater, or as afterwards they regarded Titus. The fall of the Asmonean dynasty seems to have been a relief to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Israel by this time belonged wholly to the party of the Pharisees. Pompey by force of arms vanquished only the military. All that the Jews wanted was religious liberty, or rather non-interference with the obligations laid upon them by their Law. The Pharisees preferred Rome, which cared for none of the things connected with their religion, to a dynasty — national indeed — but in general hostile to their ideas.

Strabo tells us that somewhere about this period he met with a liberal-minded Jew, whose feelings with respect to the Temple he was at pains to discover. "Our people" said the Israelite, "hate it as a den of tyrants, but revere it as a Sanctuary."

Hyrcanus was confirmed in the pontificate by Pompey, but all secular authority was taken away from him, while Antipater was made civil governor of Judea. Thus the high-priest became a vassal of Rome, appointed by Roman authority. Those Jews who had been most active in the war were beheaded. Jerusalem became tributary to the Romans. The conquests of John Hyrcanus and of Alexander Jannæus beyond Jordan and in Cœle-Syria, were annulled. All the seaboard of Judea was lost. The free cities subjugated or destroyed by triumphant Jews (among them Pella, Azotus, Gaza, and Joppa) were restored to liberty. Gadara, which the Jews had torn down shortly before, was rebuilt by Pompey at the request of his freedman, Demetrius the Gadarene.

Samaria was not rebuilt at this time, but the country was no longer under the oppressive yoke of the Jews. The Jewish dominion consisted of two parts, Galilee and Judea, separated by Samaria, which lay between them.

All Syria became a Roman province. Scaurus was its first pro-consul. Roman justice was established, and on justice followed peace and order; but these blessings cost men dear. In a short time more than ten thousand talents had been paid over to the conquerors.

"But while to Judea the triumph of the Romans seemed a great deliverance, it was of unspeakable importance to ourselves. Christianity could not have expanded under a Jewish national monarchy; that monarchy was therefore set aside." [1]

Aristobulus, with his sons and his two daughters, followed his conqueror to Rome in chains. One son, Alexander, who had married his cousin, the daughter of Hyrcanus, made his escape, while on the way; the other, Antigonus, with his

[1] Renan.

sisters, appeared in Pompey's triumph 61 B.C. A very great number of Jewish captives were also brought to Rome, and greatly increased the strength of an already flourishing colony in that city, which afterwards became of great importance in the Christian world.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RISE OF HEROD.

POMPEY quitted Judea the year after he had besieged and won the Temple. Palestine was thenceforward to form a district in one of the provinces of the Roman Empire, and to share its destinies. It was incorporated with Syria, of which Æmilius Scaurus was appointed legate, or proconsul. Judea quietly submitted to Roman rule. The only people who still resisted Rome's mighty power in that part of the East were the Nabathean Arabs. Scaurus, however, conquered their King Hareth, or Aretas, but Pompey claimed the honor of the victory.

In the year 57 B. C. Gabinius was made proconsul of Syria, and governed his province for two years. He had held an important command under Pompey, and was in all things devoted to his patron. Like him he had a mania for asserting his own importance.

He divided Palestine into five judicial districts, an arrangement extremely distasteful to the Jews, as it impaired the authority of their Sanhedrim. He also rebuilt cities destroyed by the Asmonean princes. Population came back to places which had been laid waste thirty or forty years before.

Gabinius was notorious for his exactions, even at a time when the pillage of provinces seemed the perquisite of a proconsul, but at any rate his administration was an immense advance on that of the later Asmoneans. As M. Renan phrases it, "The people had complete religious liberty, but were no longer permitted to commit religious murders."

Pompey had been lenient in his treatment of Aristobulus and his family, though they were forced to grace his triumph

in chains. Alexander, the son who had succeeded in making his escape on his journey to Italy, reappeared in Judea, and in the year 57 B.C. entered Jerusalem, and drove out the high-priest Hyrcanus, his uncle and father-in-law. Gabinius sent against him his lieutenant Mark Antony. Seconded by Antipater (the father of Herod), Antony defeated Alexander, who would have been utterly crushed but for the activity and influence of his mother, who, remembering that her husband and three other children were held in Rome as hostages, sought an interview with Gabinius, and by money and intercession, persuaded him to show mercy to her son. Hyrcanus was brought back to Jerusalem and reinstated in the pontificate.

Before long, Aristobulus, with his younger son Antigonus, escaped from Rome. He returned to Judea, where the rule of the Romans, and of Antipater, had been considered by the Jews so oppressive that he was received with enthusiasm by those who had previously hated and opposed him. He was, however, recaptured by the Romans in the strong fortress of Machærus beyond Jordan, on the edge of the wild country peopled by the Arabs. Gabinius sent him back to Rome in chains, but interceded with the Senate for permission for his children to reside in Judea. It looks as if he had pledged his word to their mother that they should be left at liberty.

Antipater of Idumea, meanwhile, made himself the humble servant of the Romans, seeking in every way to prove to them how useful they might find the Jews if they only knew how to manage them.

Gabinius, after returning from an expedition to Egypt which followed the overthrow and capture of Aristobulus, found Judea in a ferment. The Roman garrison had left Jerusalem, and was encamped on Mount Gerizim, where it was being besieged by Alexander. In vain Antipater had been trying to intervene between the contending parties. Alexander was routed by the Romans, and Gabinius returned to Rome (52 B.C.) to answer charges that had been laid against him.

He was succeeded by Crassus as proconsul of Syria, a man already notorious for acts of extortion and pillage. On his way to attack the Parthians he turned aside into Judea, and once more robbed the Temple at Jerusalem of its golden ornaments, under pretence that money must be raised to carry on the war. It is said that he accepted a bribe of a solid bar of gold in return for a promise that he would spare the Temple Treasury, but he could not resist the temptation to carry off the two thousand talents Pompey had left untouched.

In this war with the Parthians Crassus was defeated, and being made prisoner was put to death by being forced to swallow molten gold.

Caius Cassius Longinus his lieutenant (the Cassius so well known to us in history and Shakespeare), had escaped from the victorious Parthians, and became his chief's successor. On returning from the Far East he found Palestine again in a state of insurrection. The insurgents were put down and their leader executed. His whole army was captured, and his soldiers to the number, it is said, of thirty thousand were sold as slaves. This was done by the advice of Antipater, whose influence with the Romans continued to increase. In order to please the Idumeans, who, as his circumcision numbered him among the Jews, persisted in considering him a foreigner, he had married Cypros, an Idumean lady sprung from a noble family of that race.

Cassius, after this, made terms with Alexander, who went to reside at Antioch. The rivalry between Julius Cæsar and Pompey was in progress. Public sentiment in Judea was in favor of Cæsar, who, probably to strengthen his influence in that country, set Aristobulus at liberty, and gave him command of two legions. But the Jewish prince was poisoned by the partisans of Pompey before he left Italy. The body was preserved in honey. Subsequently Antony sent it to Jerusalem, and it was interred at Modin in the mausoleum of his family.

Pompey was much concerned when he discovered that Cæsar had designs against him in Syria. He feared that

the other son of Aristobulus, — Alexander, the young man dwelling in retirement at Antioch, might take part with his rival. Effectually to prevent this, he had him beheaded.

Antigonus his brother was at Ascalon, residing with his mother and sisters, one of whom (Alexandra) was renowned throughout the East for her great beauty. She married a chieftain in the Anti-Libanus, whose father, when he saw her, fell in love with her, murdered his son, and married his widow.

The battle of Pharsalia, between Pompey and Cæsar, (48 B. C.) made little change in Judea. Antipater became the devoted adherent of Cæsar, as he had been of Pompey. When Cæsar found himself in Egypt without sufficient forces, in the midst of a hostile population and without news from Rome, Antipater eagerly exerted himself to send him reinforcements and supplies. In return, when the great conqueror came to Jerusalem, he gave Antipater the privilege of Roman citizenship, with complete exemption from all taxes, and made him procurator of Judea. where the whole weight of power rested on him.

The friendship of Cæsar was so great a boon that the Jews did not fail to make the most of it. For many years they lost no opportunity of exalting Cæsar as their patron and friend. M. Renan thinks that there was less foundation for this claim in fact than Josephus would wish us to believe, but undoubtedly Cæsar, wherever he had sway, was favorable to the Jewish people.

"The views of this great man," says M. Renan, "were broad and liberal. He truly conceived liberty of conscience in the sense of absolute neutrality in the State, as enlightened nations now do. He desired the freedom of all provincial worships, and, if he had lived, he doubtless would have prevented the reaction towards strictness which, from the days of Tiberius, led the central government to insist on too much preponderance for the Roman worship. The Jews in Alexandria had their privileges confirmed. The free exercise of Jewish worship was stipulated for in the principal towns of Asia Minor. The Jews

throughout the world loved and regretted the dictator. Among the numerous provincials who mourned the Ides of March, it was remarked that Jews for several months came to make funeral lamentations over his burial-place."[1]

Meantime Antipater in Judea exercised all the power of a sovereign. He made friends with Hyrcanus, who for the tenth time had been confirmed in his dignity as high-priest, and together they undertook to repair the walls of Jerusalem. He made his son Phasael military governor of the city, and his son Herod, who was then a very young man, he made ruler in Galilee. A band called "robbers," but who were probably a remnant from the army of Alexander defeated by Cassius, claiming to be patriots like the followers of Judas Maccabæus, had established themselves on one of the mountain heights of Galilee, under a leader named Hezekiah. Herod, with great cruelty, but at the same time with great prowess, succeeded in exterminating them, and decapitated their leader. His brother Phasael was at the same time gaining the good-will of the populace in Jerusalem. The Idumean family seemed to be fast acquiring the place and power that had belonged to the Asmoneans.

Little toleration was, however, felt for Antipater and his sons by the strict Pharisees. They reproached the high-priest Hyrcanus for his weak affiliation with a "half Jew," a born enemy of Israel. They upbraided Herod for the energy that he had shown in Galilee in repressing the insurgents, and above all for the summary execution of their leader Hezekiah. A Jew, they said, however criminal, could not lawfully be put to death unless his execution had been sanctioned by the Sanhedrim.

The heads of the party in Jerusalem insisted that the son of Antipater should be tried for this offence, and Herod by advice of his father consented to the farce of a prosecution. The Council was overawed by his presence. He did not appear before them with dishevelled hair, and in mourning garments; he entered the assembly with his black

[1] The exact spot has been recently discovered in Rome.

locks well arranged, and glittering in armor. No accuser confronted him. Hyrcanus, who had received letters from Sextus Cæsar, proconsul of Syria, charging him to protect the life of his favorite, sat silent and embarrassed. The matter was dropped. The only voice uplifted was that of the President of the Council, Shemaiah, or Shammai, who foretold that the day would come when his colleagues would pay dear for their weakness on this occasion. Herod was not offended at this boldness, but endeavored to falsify the prophecy by loading Shemaiah with favors when he became king, though all his life he nourished feelings of revenge and hatred against the party of the Pharisees.

Neither the assassination of Cæsar nor the battle of Philippi greatly influenced what was passing in Judea. The country was absorbed in petty quarrels. Antipater and Herod invariably made friends with whosoever was the conqueror, and thus, whatever the turn of events might be, they gained increased power and promotion. But suffering in the rural districts became great, as the war between the Roman rivals went on. Cassius demanded from the inhabitants of Palestine a war tribute of seven hundred talents ($700,000), one hundred of which was to be paid by Galilee. Herod raised this part of the contribution, but returns from other parts of the country came slowly in. Very severe measures were taken in consequence. Many Jews of consideration and position were seized and sold as slaves, and when at last all was raised except one hundred talents Hyrcanus implored Antipater to pay out of his own resources the remaining sum. This he did, and in return Cassius appointed his son Herod proprætor of Cœle-Syria, and promised to make him king of Syria when he should have triumphed over the triumvirs, Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus.

Dean Stanley thus describes Herod as he was at this time: "Like a true descendant of Esau, he was 'a man of the field,' 'a mighty hunter.' He was renowned for his horsemanship. In the Arab exercises of the *jereed*, or throwing the lance, and in the archery of the ancient

Edomites he was the wonder of his generation. He had a splendid presence. His fine black hair on which he prided himself, and which when it turned gray was dyed to keep up the appearance of youth, was magnificently dressed. On one occasion, when he sprang out of a bath where assassins had surprised him, even his naked figure was so majestic that they fled before him. Nor was he destitute of noble qualities, however much obscured by the violence of the age, and by the furious, almost frenzied cruelty which despotic power breeds in Eastern potentates. There was a greatness of soul in him which might have raised him above the petty intrigues by which he was surrounded. His family affections were deep and strong. In that time of the general dissolution of domestic ties, it is refreshing to witness the almost extravagant tenderness with which on the plain of Sharon he founded, in the fervor of his filial love, the city of Antipatris. To the citadel above Jericho he gave the name of his Arabian mother, Cypros; to one of the towers of Jerusalem, and to a fortress in the valley, which still retains the name, looking down upon the Jordan, he left the privilege of commemorating his beloved and devoted brother Phasael. In the lucid intervals of the darker days which beset the close of his career, nothing can be more pathetic than his remorse for his domestic crimes; nothing more genuine than his tears of affection for his grandchildren."

About the year 43 B.C. Antipater died of poison. The circumstances of his death were never made clear; Jewish historians hint that it was due to one Malich, a friend and confidant of Hyrcanus, who was desirous to rid his patron from what he considered the malign influence of the Idumean.

His son Herod had been married to Doris, a Jewish lady, who had borne him one son, whom he called Antipater. He now aspired to an alliance with the Asmonean royal family, and succeeded in being betrothed to the beautiful Mariamne, the granddaughter of Hyrcanus the high-priest. Her parents were cousins. Her father, Alexander the son

of Aristobulus, had married Alexandra the daughter of Hyrcanus, so that she was descended from both the rival branches of the Asmonean family. This alliance materially assisted Herod's fortunes, but in the end it led to the most frightful crimes.

The result of the battle of Philippi caused Herod once more to change his patrons. He became as devoted to Octavius and Mark Antony as he had been to Pompey or to Cassius. After the victory at Philippi, Antony became virtually Emperor of the East; and it was his plan to set up "kings" (so-called) in the various provinces, whose chief duty was to see to the collections of the taxes, the matter most important to himself. In vain complaints were brought to him against Herod and Phasael. The great Roman remained their fast friend. Hyrcanus sent an envoy to him while he was at Ephesus, entreating him to set at liberty those Jews who had been sold into slavery by Cassius for their inability to raise his war tribute. Antony complied at once, taking care to point out at the same time the difference between himself and Cassius. All that the party of the Pharisees did in the hope that they might injure Herod, only served to advance his fortunes. Antony took pleasure in responding to their complaints by giving the title of Tetrarch to Phasael and Herod, and by a formal decree putting them in charge of the government of Judea. After a year spent in dalliance in Egypt, Antony returned to Italy, and divided the world with Octavius. He created many petty vassal kings, — such as we now know in the East by the name of khedives. These "kings" (called by the Romans *reges*) were much despised by the Roman people, who looked upon them, not as sovereigns, but as farmers of taxes in the provinces.

The Romans, having now as it were become masters of the riches of the Orient, gave themselves up to a venality unexampled before or since, unless in the case of the Spanish conquerors in Peru and Mexico. They thought only of riches. The gold which flowed in upon them purchased delights of which they had never dreamed. Their

native Italy was not a wealthy land; life there was not luxurious; but the riches, luxuries, and pleasures of the Orient changed all their notions. Antony, above others, seems to have lost his reason. His daily life for ten years was a round of self-indulgence. From history and from Shakespeare we know it well.

The state of supineness into which the Romans fell inspired Antigonus, the youngest son of Aristobulus, with a desire to create fresh disturbances in Palestine. He hated the Romans, and he hated Herod. He made an alliance with the Parthians, whose splendid and well organized cavalry had more than once been able to make head against the Roman legions.

Cassius — who would have sacrificed everything, even the glory of Rome, for the success of his favorite republican principles — had, before he fell at Philippi, sent an embassy to the Parthians, offering to form an alliance with them to act against the triumvirs. The king of Parthia responded to his wishes, and sent an army under the command of his son into Syria. In all this, Antigonus did not fail to seek his profit. The Jewish party had adopted him for its chief, and he was bitterly opposed to the Idumeans. Antigonus offered the Parthian prince a thousand talents if he would establish him on his late father's throne, and put to death Herod and all his kindred.

As the Parthian army approached Jerusalem, Herod and Phasael were nearly overpowered by a popular rising. Phasael, in company with Hyrcanus the high-priest, succeeded in escaping beyond the walls of the city, but fell into the hands of the Parthians. Herod escaped, passed over into the land of the Nabatheans, failed to induce them to espouse his cause, and then sought refuge in Egypt. There he saw Cleopatra, is believed to have repulsed her love, and certainly incurred her hatred. Subsequently he had many adventures, and at last safely landed in Italy.

Antigonus installed himself royally in Jerusalem, and assumed the Hebrew name of his great ancestor Mattathiah. The Parthians gave Phasael and Hyrcanus into his hands.

Phasael tried to kill himself, but, not succeeding in this attempt, the wounds he had inflicted were, by order of Antigonus, dressed, it is said, with poisoned salve.

"As Antigonus-Mattathiah proposed to exercise the double functions of high-priest and king, he caused the ears of Hyrcanus to be cut off, because it was said in the Law that no man physically imperfect could perform the high-priest's functions. He then sent the miserable weak old man into exile in Parthia.

Antigonus-Mattathiah reigned in Jerusalem three and a half years, but by degrees he lost the support of his allies, the Parthians. The power of Rome resided in the Senate; it kept ever in view one object, the glory of the parent State. The policy of the Parthians was shifting, and was changed by circumstances.

When Herod in his wanderings at last reached Rome, he told Antony of his own misfortunes and of those of his country. The Senate was convoked, and the Idumean prince appeared before it. He had done great services for Rome in the past, and more was expected of him in the future.

Antigonus, who had been guilty of receiving a royal title from the Parthians, — a title which Rome considered she alone had the right to confer, — was declared an enemy to the Roman Republic. Antony then proposed to make Herod King of the Jews, and a formal decree was passed to that effect. After the session of the Senate was over, Herod, walking between Octavius and Antony, went up to the Capitol to return thanks to the gods, and to witness the depositing of the decree given in his favor in the *tabularium* (40 B. C.).

This decree of course was not accepted in Judea. Herod had to conquer his royalty foot by foot. Even torture could not force Jewish prisoners to recognize an Idumean as their king.

Ventidius, the Roman general who had been sent to fight the Parthians, and to support Herod, was gained over by Antigonus, who had control of the treasures of the Temple.

He was lukewarm in the cause of King Herod, and gave him and his small army of mercenaries only feeble support; nor was this all; more than one of the lieutenants of Ventidius were gained over by the gold of Antigonus. Herod, after displaying much warlike ability, decided to seek an interview with Antony, who was warring with Antiochus of Commagene, a small kingdom on the shores of the Black Sea. He wanted to complain to his Roman patron of the conduct of his lieutenants, and to convince him of the importance of his own cause.

In Herod's absence all went ill with his followers in Judea. One of his brothers was killed at Jericho. The Galileans revolted, and drowned in the Lake of Gennesareth the officials Herod had appointed to govern them.

During the next winter (38–37 B. C.) Herod pushed on his military operations with vigor, and in the spring laid siege to Jerusalem. While preliminary works were going on he went into Samaria, and there celebrated his nuptials with Mariamne, to whom he had been betrothed some years before. As soon as the ceremonies were concluded the bridegroom resumed the siege of Jerusalem, assisted by a large Roman force under a new general.

At last the various defences of Jerusalem were taken, and an assault was made upon the Temple. The Romans were exasperated by the length of the siege, and the stubbornness of the Jews' resistance, and slaughtered without pity all they found. Herod afterwards insisted that he had spared no entreaties to restrain the soldiers' fury.

Antigonus came forth from the Tower of Baris and flung himself at the feet of the Roman general, but that personage showed him little generosity. He insulted the suppliant, loaded him with chains, and sent him to Antony, who was then at Antioch. Herod, who was resolved upon his rival's death, paid Antony a large sum that he should be scourged and then beheaded. It was the first time that the Romans had inflicted this punishment upon a captive king.

Pillage and massacre after the assault went on for some

days in Jerusalem. They were only stopped when Herod promised the Roman general to pay a large sum out of his private means to the infuriated legionaries. He was especially solicitous that the Roman soldiers should not enter the most sacred portions of the Temple, and behold those objects which even the Jews were forbidden to look upon.

Thus the authority of Herod was established, and there was afterwards no general revolt of the Jews against Roman authority for about one hundred years. The Book of Baruch in the Apocrypha is supposed to have been written at this period, and vividly reflects its sorrows. The original book ends, however, at the eighth verse of the third chapter; the remainder is an addition written in Greek.

There are other Jewish books supposed to belong to this period: one called the Psalms of Solomon, another the Assumption of Moses; but these have not been admitted by the English or the Latin Church even into the Apocrypha. All these writings breathe the most bitter feelings against the evil priests who had profaned God's service and His altar.

While Judea was thus passing from degradation to degradation, events were taking place important to Jewish history in the outer world. "Israel was spreading itself over the earth, bearing with it its quiet, peaceable domestic life, its moral law, its steadfast spirit, its worship of one God, and its hope of immortality. Jews were designed to serve as leaven in the moral progress of every country, rather than to form a separate nation. The Jew and the Mussulman are not wedded to any particular spot upon the earth. The Jew of the Dispersion fulfilled his mission far better than the Jews in Palestine, who were always trying to create a national government, and then working to destroy it. The ground occupied by Christianity in its earlier years was in lands that Judaism had already permeated before the birth of Christ. In general, the successors of Alexander in the East, down to Antiochus Epiphanes, were favorable to the Jews. They made use of them to colonize their new cities. Honest, industrious, and apt in small

employments, these transplanted Jews formed an excellent nucleus for a middle class of citizens. Permanently a nation the Jews never were after the Return from Captivity, — a peasantry they were never. They quickly took root in any country, and looked upon the land in which they were born as their fatherland. Viewed with jealousy and as aliens by the populations round them, they meddled little with questions of dynasty, and were always on the side of the strongest party. Fidelity to any sovereign who had established his authority was one of the things on which they prided themselves. They never took part with revolutionists, but when a sovereign had fallen they pledged their allegiance to his successor." [1]

We well know how St. Paul found synagogues and Jews in every city that he visited in Europe, Syria, and Asia Minor. Strabo, the writer who knew most about the earth at that day, said of them: "They have entered every city, and it would not be easy to find a spot that has not received their tribe and been dominated by it."

But anti-Semitism is not a product of our own day. The Jews were never popular among other inhabitants of the Greek cities, and the Roman authorities were kept busy protecting them in their municipal privileges.

Rome received Judaism later than lands in the East that were peopled by the Greeks. The powerful institutions of the Republic did not readily admit invading faiths. The first proselytism attempted by the Jews in Rome seems to have been made by Asmonean embassies. In the year 139 B. C. propagandism was severely checked by the Roman prætor. The Romans called the Lord of Hosts Jupiter Sabanius, and considered Him a Phrygian Deity.

Pompey brought troops of captive Jews to Rome to swell his triumph. Most of these captives were soon set free, for their fidelity to their religious customs made their service inconvenient to their masters. These freedmen formed a settlement on the right bank of the Tiber. This soon became a large and powerful Jewish community, legally

[1] *Cf.* Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. v., book iii.

recognized, having, as the Jews said, the rights of citizenship. At any rate, as we may see in an oration of Cicero, wherein he defended Flaccus, they were an important factor in the life of Rome. Puteoli was the landing-place for the crowd of Jews and Orientals bound to the metropolis, who thence reached the great city by the Appian Way.

The Romans, while they excluded from their city societies whose members were bound together by their common worship of some national god, allowed such societies to form themselves outside the city into what were called *collegia*. Of these the most active, and the most powerful, was that which clustered round the Jewish synagogue. Its interior organization was at once republican, and subject to the elders. Each separate synagogue had a chief who was treated with deep respect as the father of all.

Julius Cæsar and Augustus were, in general, opposed to such societies, but they made an exception in favor of the Jews. If Josephus is to be believed, the Jews in Rome under their rule enjoyed exceptional privileges. Every year the *collegium* sent up, by an envoy, its offerings to the Temple at Jerusalem, and as the most distant cities sent yearly the same tribute, — a band of priests, lawyers, and scribes, who had no other occupation than the study and interpretation of the Law, was formed around the Temple, supported by the gifts of out-lying Jewish communities throughout the world.

Roman tolerance went so far that the Jew was held exempt from military service, even if he were a Roman citizen. The strict observance of the Sabbath would have been enough to make military service in a Gentile army impossible for a devout Jew. The Roman government indeed recognized their obligations on the Sabbath to a certain extent. It was admitted that a Jew could not be summoned to a law-court on the Sabbath day; and the monthly distributions of corn or money made at Rome, when the day fell upon Saturday, were put off till the next day. The so-called worship of the emperor roused no opposition, for Augustus showed great moderation in the

titles he accepted. This trouble did not begin until the reign of Caligula.

Provincial cities, jealous of the Jews, did not fail to complain that, side by side with the protection of the laws which they enjoyed in common with other men, they received and retained especial legal privileges. Among all the nations of antiquity the citizen was bound to be of the religion of his city; the Jews alone, by the exception that they claimed (and almost everywhere obtained) broke through this old law of the world.

Almost every Jew dispersed among the heathen, parted from the Temple, the priesthood, and the intolerable burden of traditional observance of the Law, became a zealous propagandist. He felt his own religious superiority, and he rejoiced in gaining over to his faith all whom he thought he might influence. The Roman world was thus covered by errant missionaries, whose attention to their own personal interests never interfered with their ardor to effect conversions.

This spirit of propagandism, while it excited enmity among the populace, inspired thinking minds with a feeling that the wondrous monotheistic religion of the Jews presented attractions for the souls of men. To be sure, the falsest prejudices, the most absurd reports, spread among the populace, and formed their current opinions about the Jews. Sometimes it was said that they worshipped Bacchus, sometimes, as we have seen, an ass's head; also that they had sacred rites in which each year they sacrificed a Greek; while cultivated men scoffed at the notion that the rude partisans of a foreign superstition could indulge the idea of converting to their faith the most civilized nations of the world.

But a profound change was taking place in the religious sentiments of men at that period. Greco-Latin paganism was becoming insipid. People were searching in all directions for something that might satisfy their craving to believe and love, which the old mythology provided for no longer; and it was towards Eastern mysticism, and Eastern

fables, that souls, restless with religious fervor, turned. The worship of Isis, Serapis, and Mithra, which grew into favor at Rome, especially among women, had something in it more tender, more devout than the Greek and Latin worships, which were gross and carnal.

Among all these Oriental religions the Jewish displayed its immense superiority. Not Phariseeism, as enjoined by the priests at their stronghold in Jerusalem, but Judaism, as presented by the prophets, — a Judaism broader, less rigid, less absorbed in observances of ritual, than that prevailing in Jerusalem; a Judaism less calculated to please theological disputants and doctors, but more communicative, more accessible than that which, half a century later, was denounced by Jesus Christ in the very courts of the Temple.

The prophets had foretold that the Jews would become a missionary people. Their lives commended their religion. Their self-discipline, their repose in the service of their One God, the Lord Jehovah, their respect for the Sabbath, and their observance of the great principles of morality had an important influence upon their pagan associates. There came to be a vast number of friends to Judaism, who led the Jewish life without formally making themselves Jews by the initiatory rite of circumcision. We may say that the splendid career of St. Paul had been thus prepared for. Men were coming to the conclusion that the one thing needful was to worship the Eternal God after a pure manner, and to observe those precepts of natural religion which were called the commandments of Noah.[1]

While Judaism was thus imperceptibly permeating Greek and Roman life, princes in the East, following Herod's example, made themselves Jews that they might contract alliances with the Herodian family; while more sincere conversions took place in the royal house of Adiabene, brought about by a Jewish trader named Hananiah.

But we return to Herod, a man now in the prime of life,

[1] For these observations upon Jewish proselytism, half a century before the Christian era, I am indebted to M. Renan's "History of the People of Israel."

and in the full possession of power. We have seen what Dean Stanley said of him when his youth was full of promise, like that of Nero, Henry VIII., or Ivan the Terrible; here is Renan's picture of him at a more advanced age:

"Herod was now thirty-seven years of age. He was fully in possession of his kingdom, but numerous enemies were around him. . . . Herod was a splendid Arab, intelligent, skilful, brave, strong of body, inured to fatigue, and much given to women. Mehemet Ali in our own day gives us probably his measure and his limit. Capable of anything — even of baseness — where the thing in hand was to attain an object of ambition, he had a real feeling of greatness; but he was completely out of tune with the country he had to govern. He dreamed of a worldly future, whereas the future of Israel was to be solely religious. No higher motive seems to have been his. Hard, cruel, passionate, and inflexible — as a man must be to succeed among evil surroundings — in everything he considered his own interests alone. He saw the world as it is, and being of a coarse nature he loved it. Religion, philosophy, patriotism, virtue, had no meaning for him. He did not like the Jews; possibly he had a little regard for Idumea, or, more probably, for Ascalon. He was, in short, a fine animal; a lion whom one admires for his massive throat and his thick mane, without expecting any moral sense from him. . . . In the end nothing was left of him but an imposing ruin, and a frightful tale. He hindered nothing, — he effected nothing. His life was just the opposite of Christianity. At his death he passed into nothingness. He had done his own will, — not the will of God!"

CHAPTER XV.

HEROD THE KING.

WHEN Herod returned to Jerusalem as its king every party in the city received the "half-Jew" with ill will. His first acts of sovereignty were ferocious and cruel. He put to death forty-five leading partisans of Antigonus-Mattathiah, among them the members of the Sanhedrim who in his youth had summoned him to appear before them. He spared, however, their leaders, Shemaiah and Abatalion. His soldiers went so far as to shake the dead bodies of their victims, that pieces of gold and silver might drop out, if hidden in their winding-sheets.

At heart Herod was a Hellenist like Antiochus Epiphanes, but he was far wiser than the Syrian sovereign. He never thought of suppressing Judaism, though he did not believe in it, — nor in fact in any religion. He made many concessions to the more scrupulous Jews, but looked upon such favors as a sop to superstition. On none of the monuments he erected in Jerusalem was the likeness of any living thing, whether of man or beast. His image was not stamped upon his coins. He required those who married his daughters to be circumcised. The Arab chief who wedded his sister Salome was induced by him to embrace Judaism, and he always treated with high consideration the two leaders of the Pharisees, Shemaiah and Pollio, or Abatalion.

When he was beyond the bounds of Palestine however, he set at nought the observance of the Law. He enriched Pagan temples; his associates and companions were all Hellenists, and his mode of life, even when he resided in Jerusalem, was entirely Greek.

He appointed whomsoever it might please him to be high-priest. Hananel, whom he brought from Babylon to fill the office, he deposed, but he afterwards reinstated him. When Hananel died, he was succeeded by an obscure man, Joshua the son of Phabi, and he by a certain Simon, son of Boëthus, an Alexandrian Jew, whose daughter was considered the most beautiful woman in Jerusalem. Herod, who was a polygamist, wanted to marry her, and made her father high-priest to raise her family nearer to his own level. Simon and his kindred were avowedly Hellenists and Epicureans, but this did not prevent them from being successively high-priests during the latter part of Herod's reign, and that of his successor.

Though the high-priests of his appointment were Sadducees, Herod had few troublesome misunderstandings with the other party. They treated him better on the whole than they had done their national sovereigns, John Hyrcanus and Alexander Jannæus; they had come to the conclusion "that there were two worlds, separated as it were by a partition, the Jewish Legal world, and the Court world;" and that to the latter the Law could not always be expected to apply.

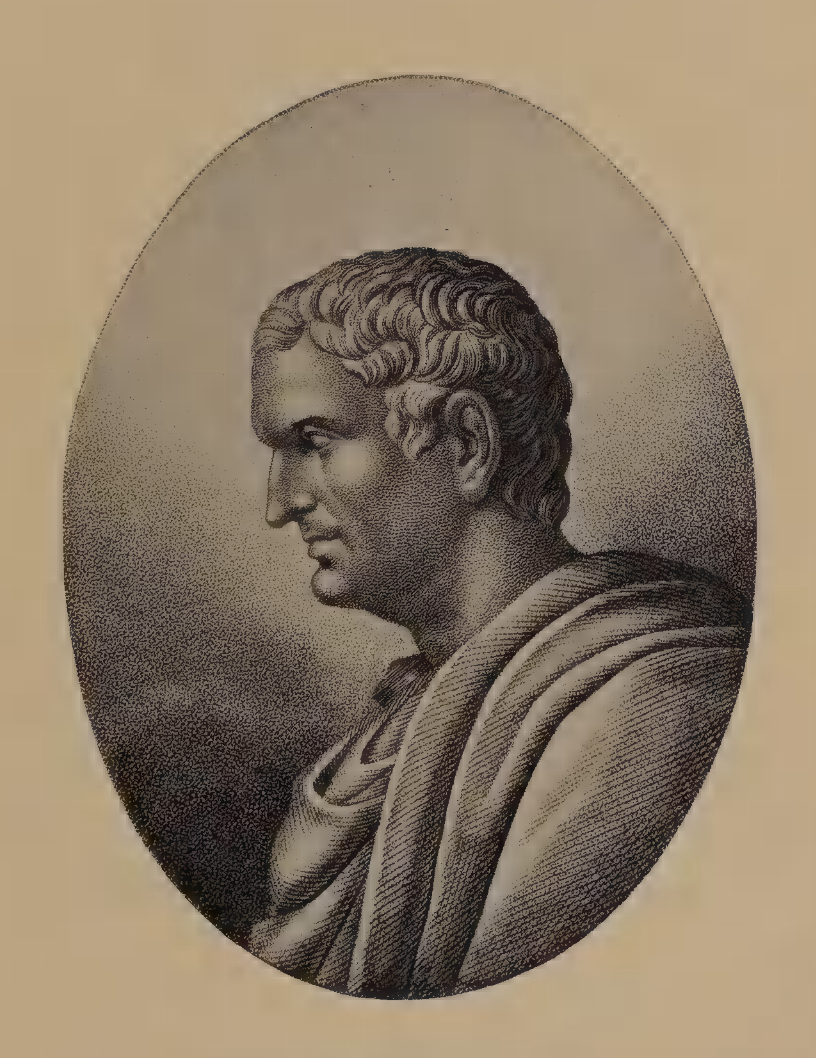
Mariamne, Herod's Asmonean wife, united both branches of her illustrious family.

"This last of the Asmoneans," says M. Renan, "is the only character that relieves the eye of the historian through so many horrors. She was a princess of rare beauty, irreproachable in her way of life, imposing in her aspect, proud and virtuous, courageous and spirited; respecting her name and birth, but creating many enemies, especially in her husband's family, by her firm and decided character. Herod adored her, but he was not happy with her, for she did little to win his favor. Alexandra, her mother, was a bad woman, malevolent, intriguing, and cowardly. She never relaxed her violent opposition to her son-in-law. All Herod's feminine world was on the worst terms with his mother Cypros, and his sister Salome. Quarrels among them were incessant, and tragedies it was easy to foresee."

Hyrcanus, the ex-high-priest, still a prisoner among the Parthians, was very desirous of returning to Jerusalem, but the loss of his ears prevented his restoration to the high-priesthood. In vain did the Jews in Babylon, among whom he was held in high esteem, warn him not to let himself be drawn again into public life and its dangers, but he was anxious to get back to Jerusalem; his return was permitted, and he was cordially received by the new king. Hananel, the Babylonian Jew on whom Herod had conferred the pontifical dignity, claimed on his mother's side descent from the House of David. His appointment highly displeased Alexandra and Mariamne, who thought the office ought to have been conferred on the legitimate descendant of Hyrcanus, his grandson Aristobulus, last of the Asmoneans, the very handsome brother of the beautiful Mariamne.

What gave Alexandra great influence at the court of Herod was that she was on terms of intimacy with Cleopatra, who could do anything she pleased with Roman Antony. Herod found himself compelled to satify his wife and mother-in-law, who had moved Antony to request the advancement of the Asmonean prince, by sending portraits of him and of his sister to Alexandria. Hananel was deprived of his authority as high-priest, and replaced by Aristobulus (35 B.C.). But the young man, though his beauty and grace strongly impressed all who saw him exercise his priestly functions, did not long enjoy his honors. He accompanied the court to Jericho, then a little paradise of delights, with its tropical vegetation, its forest of palm trees, the fragrance of its balsams, and its beautiful tanks of clear water, in which the young men of the royal household loved to bathe. Herod gave private orders to some of the foreign soldiers of his guard. One evening as these men, with the young high-priest, were frolicking and diving together in a bathing tank they seized on Aristobulus, and, as if in sport, held him under water till he was drowned. Then Hananel was put back in his place.

This murder it was hoped would pass for an unhappy



MARK ANTONY.

accident, but Alexandra was not deceived. She sent to Cleopatra, begging her to lay the matter before Antony, who summoned Herod to meet him, and answer to the charge of having instigated the destruction of his brother-in-law. Again Herod's wealth, flatteries, and charming manners saved him; and although Cleopatra urged his ruin, she, for once, did not prevail over the facile Antony, who seems to have hinted to her that it was not well to look too curiously into the acts of princes.

Thenceforward Herod found his worst enemy in Cleopatra. He had resisted her fascinations in his earlier life; she detested him accordingly, — and besides, she coveted his kingdom.

In the year 34 B. C. Antony gave her all the sea-coast of Palestine to add to her Egyptian dominions, and the beautiful valley which contained the city of Jericho. Herod consented to part with these portions of his dominions for two hundred talents a year. How cordially Cleopatra hated Herod, Shakespeare has not omitted to notice in his tragedy.[1]

She came to Jerusalem this same year, where Herod received her with great apparent cordiality, and many honors. Josephus thinks that it was at this time that she tried to make him fall in love with her, for at that period of his life Herod was in his prime of manly beauty; had he done so, she no doubt would have made use of his advances to ruin him with Antony; but Herod was prudent. For one moment he thought of compassing her death while she was in his power, but decided that it would be better to overwhelm her with rich presents, and conduct her with honor back to her Egyptian frontier.

Civil war broke out soon after this between Octavius and Antony. Herod desired to assist his patron, but Cleopatra insisted that he must be sent to fight the Nabathean Arabs, who were menacing her new possession of Jericho, and had not been punctual in paying tribute. Herod was consequently not at the battle of Actium (31 B. C.). By the

[1] Antony and Cleopatra, act iii., scene 3.

result of that battle he lost in Antony a powerful friend, and in Cleopatra his worst enemy.

He promptly decided to go and meet Octavius, but before leaving Jerusalem he put to death the aged priest Hyrcanus, under pretence that he had conspired with the King of the Nabatheans, but in reality because he dreaded lest in his absence the Jews should make the old priest king. Always it was his policy, as in the case of the infants of Bethlehem, to promptly put to death all whom at any moment he found reason to consider dangerous to his power.

It was in the spring of the year 30 B. C. that Herod saw Octavius at Rhodes. When he appeared before the Roman conqueror, he stripped off his royal ornaments, and approached him as a suppliant. He had been the firm friend of Antony, but he assured Octavius he would be equally true to him. Herod in this was quite sincere. He had made up his mind to be always on the side of the most powerful Roman. Octavius believed him, ordered him to reassume his royal robes, and confirmed him in all his dignities.

A few months later Herod saw Octavius again, and, having in the meantime rendered him important services, he gained all he wanted. Octavius gave him back Joppa, and the sea-coast of Palestine, adding to it several important towns, Gadara, Samaria, and Gaza, once conquered by the Asmonean princes, but rent from Judea by Pompey twenty years before.

Herod accompanied his new patron to Antioch. "The year that to all appearances should have led to his fall had been fortunate for him. He had exchanged a fantastic patron, who could not but come to a bad end, ruled as he was by the most dangerous woman in the world, for a far more safe protector destined like himself to rule for many years." [1]

But Herod was not long to rejoice in his good fortune. Flushed with delight at his success in gaining the good-will of Octavius, he reached his home at Jerusalem anticipating

[1] Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. v., book iii.

the cordial greetings and congratulations of his beloved Mariamne. To his surprise and disappointment she received him with tears and reproaches. She accused him of the murder of her brother, her grandfather, and her other kinsmen, and she let him perceive that in case he never returned from his visit to Octavius, she knew that he had given orders for her own. Madly as he adored his beautiful and noble wife, it appears that, without actually repelling his affection, she had, up to this time, felt for him fear rather than love. Irritated to madness by the way she had received him in his hour of triumph, he listened at last to his wicked sister Salome, who had long said to him in secret, "You will never be safe, brother, while she lives." Unhappily the political intrigues of Alexandra made the conduct of her daughter matter of suspicion. The mind of Herod was inflamed against her. He summoned a meeting of his councillors, and with their assent, condemned to death the woman whom he loved. Alexandra, her mother, fearing for herself, insisted that she did not share the feelings of her daughter. As Mariamne was being led forth to execution she rushed forward, furiously flung herself on her unhappy child, struck her in the face, and reproached her with being an ungrateful woman, who was about to suffer only what she had deserved. A cry of horror rose among the bystanders. Mariamne said not a word. With calmness and dignity she met her fate. She did not even cast a look of reproach on her unnatural mother.

Herod, on this occasion, had displayed the brutal instincts of a savage Arab, but after his sentence had been carried out, his passionate love for his wife returned. He became a victim to mad paroxysms of remorse. He fancied he saw before him the woman he adored and whom he had murdered. "The ghosts of princes he had put to death," says Josephus, "wandered through every chamber in his palace, threatening him with the Last Judgment." Well might he have exclaimed in the words put into his mouth by a poet of the nineteenth century: —

"And I have earned those tortures well,
Which unconsumed are still consuming."[1]

He spoke to his lost wife. He called for her, gave orders to send for her. To distract his thoughts he plunged into nameless excesses; he hunted frantically, and rode furiously. At Samaria, a place which revived memories of the first days of his married life, — his honeymoon with his adored and murdered Mariamne, — he almost died of re-excited passion. A rumor of his death reached Jerusalem, and Alexandra was preparing to take advantage of it, when she was seized and put to death. She had lived long enough to witness the violent and disgraceful deaths of her father-in-law Aristobulus II., her husband Alexander, her brother-in-law Antigonus, her son Aristobulus III., her father Hyrcanus, and her daughter Mariamne.

Herod recovered, but he was ever after subject to a strange irritation, physical and mental. On the smallest pretext he would send his servants and his best friends to the torture chamber or the scaffold. "All Oriental despots," adds M. Renan, "follow, like a machine once started, the same downward road."

While any remnant of the Asmonean family survived, there was no peace for Herod. A family called the Sons of Baba, akin to the Maccabees, had signalized itself by attachment to its national sovereigns. In their moment of danger an Idumean chief called Costobarus saved them, and Herod for twelve years, in spite of his spies, had not been able to discover them. Costobarus, meantime, became Herod's brother-in-law, having married his sister Salome. When she grew tired of her husband she betrayed his secrets to Herod, who at once put to death Costobarus and the Sons of Baba.

No direct descendant of the Asmonean House remained to oppose, as the Jews said, Herod's "violations of the Law." He had triumphed over his enemies, the sun of the brave Maccabees had set in blood, and he passed on

[1] Lord Byron's "Hebrew Melodies."

to a period distinguished by his lavish patronage of architecture and sculpture.

At all times Herod's life had been in opposition to the moral law, and now, strong in power and prosperity, he proposed to gather in the fruits of his crimes. He resembled not a little one of those enlightened khedives, rulers of Egypt in our own century, — princes who set up the Opera at Cairo, who patronize what is abhorrent and unintelligible to their subjects and forbidden by the religion of the State, — but who silence the murmurs of their orthodox subjects, because they feel themselves to be backed by the public sentiment of Europe and by their hold on the resources of their country.[1]

Almost all the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire instituted at this time public games, to be given every five years in honor of the Emperor Augustus. Herod was not behind other princes in this movement. To celebrate the games he erected a theatre, an amphitheatre, and a hippodrome; and these, to the disgust of pious Jews, he set up in Jerusalem. There were no statues in these places, but among their decorations he placed "trophies," — that is, the helmet and panoply of a Roman warrior, — so disposed as to bear some resemblance to the human form. These excited unfriendly comments among the Jews, and Herod felt himself obliged to go in person to the theatre, take down his trophies, and show to the most obstinate Pharisees that they consisted only of wooden logs dressed up for the occasion. And here M. Renan calls our attention to the fact that these ignorant fanatics, in their abhorrence of Herod's public games, were in advance of the average moral sentiment of their time. The games were splendid; they were attended by crowds. Nothing had been seen equal to the beauty of the costumes or the brilliant effect of the athletes, or the musicians. There were also combats with wild animals, in which wretches under sentence of death were exposed to the teeth of ferocious beasts. Wild animals were rare and costly; but what, elsewhere, excited

[1] *Cf.* Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. v.

the admiration of spectators, was beheld with indignation in Jerusalem. The Pharisees protested. They thought it horrible that people should find pleasure in the peril run by wretched human beings. All their old manners and customs seemed to them overthrown, but they had no longer power to resist; the faintest murmur was punished with death.[1]

The worship of Augustus as a god spread to all the provinces, though it was not officially sanctioned by the emperor. Temples were everywhere erected in his honor. Herod built them in Stratonis, now called Cæsarea, in Panium, Sebaste (or Samaria), and Batanea, all Roman cities in Palestine. His temples were accounted some of the most beautiful erected in that age, but he dared not build one in Jerusalem. He, however, built himself in that city a palace which was esteemed a marvel of magnificence. He would adorn it with neither painting nor sculptures, but he beautified it with exquisite coloring, and with the lace-like marble work still seen in the palaces of Indian Mohammedan kings and in the Alhambra. His parks, too, and his pleasure grounds at Jericho and Herodium were delightful. He added three towers of immense strength to the fortifications of Jerusalem. One he called Phasael, in memory of his beloved brother, another Mariamne, after his murdered and lamented wife, and the other was Hippicus, named after a favorite, whose history is now unknown. He also strengthened and adorned the Baris, which, though divided from the Holy Mount by a deep ravine, overlooked the courts of the Temple, and in honor of Mark Anthony he called it Antonia. In Jericho, where he often resided, he built a theatre, circus, and hippodrome, as he had done in Jerusalem. Beyond Palestine he erected beautiful buildings, in whose construction he was not hampered by Jewish prejudices and restrictions. At Rhodes he built a temple to the Pythian Apollo; Athens and Sparta shared in his generosity, and in his enthusiasm for

[1] Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. v., book iii., chapter vi.

monumental decorations. He created a permanent fund for giving prizes at the Olympian Games, and the Corinthians conferred on him the title of their perpetual President. One wonders if money out of the Treasury of the Temple was expended for these pagan purposes.

He made a splendid port at Cæsarea, and adorned the city with a magnificent temple dedicated to Rome and to Augustus Cæsar. Three of its columns were, in the middle ages, brought to Venice; two of them now adorn the *piazzetta*, the third is buried in the slime of the Grand Canal, beside the place of disembarkation for the gondolas. The temple at Cæsarea was inaugurated with games, and with extraordinary pomp, ten years before our Christian era. Other persons whose memory was dear to Herod had cities which he embellished named after them. Four great fortresses were put in excellent repair. One of them, Machærus, was a wonder of construction. It rose, seemingly in defiance of nature, with chambers of marvellous beauty, beneath which were dungeons, and inexhaustible cisterns cut in the solid rock. "There was a wonderful view from the top of its towers. To the south could be seen the outlines of the Dead Sea, with Engaddi and Hebron; to the northwest of these, the hills of Judea with Jerusalem could be distinguished, with the Palace of Herod, and the Temple, overlooked by the enormous Tower of Antonia. To the right lay Jericho with its evergreen forest of palm trees; then the blue grey Jordan could be seen threading the plain." [1]

But this fortress had not been erected for the beauty of its distant prospect; it stood in the midst of a wild and dreary region, on the borders of the Arabian desert, — a challenge to the wild and restless tribes.

Other works did honor to Herod's talent for government. He put down brigandage, he encouraged commerce, he even sent at his own expense five hundred of his subjects to assist a scientific expedition fitted out to explore Arabia.

[1] "Palestine in the time of Christ," by Dr. Edmond Stapfer, Professor in the Protestant Theological Faculty of Paris.

Soon, however, he became again involved in domestic troubles, and the wild beast nature that was in him re-asserted itself.

His two sons by Mariamne, Alexander and Aristobulus, had been receiving their education in Rome. They resided in the house of Asinius Pollio, the friend of Virgil, where doubtless they often met the great poets of the day. Their father liked to see literary men about him, and was especially fond of Greek philosophy. At his court Nicolaus of Damascus, his secretary, was highly esteemed. Nicolaus was a vain man, but he had a large fund of learning. He was a native of Damascus, and deeply versed in Peripatetic philosophy. He attached himself to Herod, and became one of his chief counsellors. Herod had received in early life no Greek education, but in his later years he desired to repair this want, and Nicolaus taught him Greek philosophy, rhetoric, and history. At one time the learned secretary travelled to Italy with his patron, and their leisure time upon the voyage was employed in learned discourse, and in instruction in philosophy.

Nicolaus wrote a "Universal History" in one hundred and forty-two books,[1] in days when it would seem to us that there could be little universal history to write about. In it, however, the history of his own times was treated very fully, and his work is largely quoted by Josephus. What he tells us about Herod was no doubt as autobiographical as if it had been written by Herod's pen.

Herod's relations with Rome continued to be excellent. He long preserved the good graces of Augustus. But sub-kings, when they visited the emperor's court, found their position far from an agreeable one. "In Rome, stripped of their crowns and royal purple, they took rank with simple clients of the emperor. They might be seen clad in the Roman *toga* waiting on the Cæsar, and vying with each other in performing the lowest offices. Men of good social or political standing in Rome had no esteem whatever for these 'kings.' . . . In their own dominions, on

[1] Now lost.

the contrary, they were despots; they had power of life and death over their subjects, and Rome, satisfied with her supremacy, rarely meddled in their home affairs. Their power was not necessarily hereditary. To make it so they were obliged to propitiate the supreme power." [1]

Notwithstanding the tediousness and danger of travelling in those days, personages of importance went about the world a great deal more than we might imagine possible. When Herod went to Rome attended by Nicolaus of Damascus, it was to recover his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus; and in an evil hour Augustus consented that he should take them home with him. Their brilliant education and their noble bearing made them, when they returned to Palestine, great favorites with the Jewish people, who remembered that, through their mother, they were the last scions of the royal Asmonean race. This awakened their father's jealousy, and in the end led to their destruction.

In the glory of Herod's reign, and in the splendor of his buildings, devout Jews persisted in seeing nothing but the burdens that his rule laid on his people. In the words of the Book of Enoch "many cried out: Woe to him who buildeth his house with the sweat of his brethren; all the stones in his unholy buildings are so many sins." But all complaints were repressed with extreme severity. The towers were crowded with prisoners, who, after a short detention were put to death. A pitiless police, numerous spies, and a large body of foreign soldiers, kept down conspiracy, repressed murmuring, and preserved order in the city.

In the year 19 B.C. Herod conceived the idea of acquiring popularity among his subjects by a work which could not fail to propitiate them. The Temple, as it had been rebuilt by Zerubbabel, had stood five hundred years, and probably looked mean beside the marble palace Herod had built for his own use upon the Hill of Zion. Spurred on by his taste for constructing fine buildings, he conceived the

[1] Renan, History of the People of Israel, vol. v. book iii.

project of rebuilding the Temple on a scale of lavish magnificence.

At first the Jews were horrified when he proposed so costly a work, but Herod reassured them by promising that not a stone of the old Temple should be touched until materials for rebuilding it lay ready at hand, and until they could assure themselves that if he began the work he had money enough to finish it. The high-priest at that time was Simon the son of Boëthus, a creature of Herod. He, however, took no part in the matter.

The work was begun in the year 19 B.C. In eight years the essential parts of the building were completed, but the porches were not entirely finished until A.D. 63, on the eve of the great revolt and its total destruction. When Jesus walked in its porches and courts with his disciples, many things around the Sanctuary were in a provisional state.

Not only did Herod make no use of any part of the old Temple, but he destroyed its foundations, and doubled the size of the platform upon which its courts and porches stood. Embankments carried the rectangular space, on which the Temple itself and its surroundings were erected, to an immense height above the valleys beneath. We know this from the narrative of the Temptation, as recorded by St. Matthew and St. Luke, and Josephus tells us "it made one giddy to look down." The great cloister with four rows of columns, called Solomon's Porch,[1] which looked down on the Valley of the Kedron, was a real marvel. It was entered by subterranean stairways, so as to make no breach in the wall or colonnade. All the arrangements of the Temple of Zerubbabel, founded on those of the Temple of Solomon, which had reproduced those of the ancient Tabernacle, were followed minutely, but on a grander scale. The Altar of Sacrifice in the inner court was rebuilt on the

[1] The word "porch," such as we understand it, conveys no idea of the porches of the Temple. They were vast colonnades that surrounded the courts, not covered entrances to any part of the building.

same model. The materials of the structure were superb. The stones were for the most part quarried from the subsoil of Jerusalem. Blocks may still be seen twenty to thirty-six feet in length. The ceilings of the porches were of carved and painted wood. The monolithic columns were forty feet high and six feet in diameter. A subterranean passage enabled the king to pass unseen from the castle of Antonia to the eastern gate of the Temple, and a turret in the Temple court was constructed in which when he attended public worship he might be safe from any insults offered by the crowd.

The courts reserved for the priests, Jewish laymen, women, and Gentile proselytes, were strictly separated. The heathen proselytes were excluded from all courts but the one assigned them by haughty inscriptions, which must have met the eye of Him whose own Church was to be thrown open to all.

Herod had taken great care to offend no Jewish prejudices in his work of re-construction. Priests presided over the mason-work and carpentry, and the "Holy Place" and the "Holy of Holies" were constructed by priests alone. The pious Jews showed themselves well satisfied, and did not stint the expression of their admiration. For once Herod enjoyed a moment of popularity in Judea, which must have been a novelty to him.

But although his flatterers called him the new Solomon, though his riches were great, his power uncontested, and his delights many, Herod with all his care could not escape the humiliations that attend sickness and old age. In vain he dyed his once beautiful black hair, in vain he took every precaution against death. His life had been a series of cares; of what avail had it been to him to labor, and to have all end in nothingness?

Herod had been married ten times. We know of at least fifteen of his children. The Asmonean princes seem to have had only one wife, but Herod, like all Eastern potentates, indulged in polygamy. We have seen the result of his marriage with the Asmonean princess Mari-

amne; twelve years later the same history of fury, crime, and remorse occurred again.

Alexander and Aristobulus, when they returned from Rome, became very popular in Jerusalem. They were thought to show princely dignity and to have a truly royal air. Men remembered their mother, and the noble founders of their house, who had been true Jews, and legitimate national sovereigns. Unhappily, a party soon formed around the princes. Herod's suspicions were aroused by Salome. The young men were calumniated, and possibly they were not beyond reproach. It was reported to Herod that they thought of avenging their murdered mother, and very probably such an idea may have entered their minds. It was said that when they saw their father's wives wearing dresses and ornaments that had belonged to Mariamne, they grew angry, and threatened that those fine robes should some day be torn off from them, and that they would walk in sackcloth.

Herod's jealous temper was aroused. He grew suspicious; but at first he dissembled. He was proud of the young men, and sought for them brilliant alliances. He married Aristobulus to his cousin Berenice, the daughter of Salome, and Alexander to Glaphyra, the daughter of Archelaus, King of Cappadocia. These marriages made the princes more and more imprudent. To lower their pride their father gave an important post to Antipater, his son by Doris, his first wife, who had, until then, been kept in seclusion. He also openly announced his purpose of leaving Antipater at least part of his dominions, and presented him to Augustus as the son whom he designed for his successor.

In the year 12 B.C., the old king took a decisive step. He went to Italy, carrying with him Alexander and Aristobulus that he might accuse them before the emperor. They found Augustus at Aquileia. The emperor showed on this occasion much good feeling and tact. At a sign from him the young men fell at the feet of their father, who opened his arms to them. Antipater, who was present,

affected to share the general emotion. Then Herod gave three hundred talents towards the expenses attending the inauguration of a theatre erected in memory of Marcellus, the emperor's promising young grandson. After which he returned to Judea, where court intrigues began again more venomous than ever. Torture each day was inflicted at haphazard on unhappy wretches, upon mere suspicion, and its victims almost always died under it with shrieks of agony.

Herod at some moments was undoubtedly insane. He groaned and howled continually in his sleep. He was unable to rest day or night, and was afflicted with a terrible cutaneous disorder. During the cross-fire of tale-bearing and intriguing in the palace, Simon, the son of Boëthus was deprived of his high-priesthood, and replaced by a man named Matthias, the son of Theophilus, who by marriage belonged to the family of Boëthus.

If Herod did not at once inflict death on the sons of Mariamne, it was because of the opposing influence of two great personages, the Emperor Augustus, and Archelaus King of Cappadocia; both of whom took a personal interest in the young men. But after a time it came to pass that misunderstandings arose between Herod and Augustus, to compose which the emperor found it necessary to make concessions. He agreed that Herod should hold at Berytus (Beyrout) a court to try his sons for treason. This court was composed of members of the family of the king, and high functionaries of the province. It had one hundred and fifty members, and it granted Herod power to deal as he pleased with his sons. The Roman officers in the Assembly opposed the servile attitude of the majority, and considered the power granted to the king excessive. Nicolaus of Damascus pleaded for clemency, but the infuriated old tyrant had won the right to work his will. Nothing impels to cruelty like fear. Herod feared the popularity of his two brilliant sons, and the young men were strangled at Sebaste (Samaria) in the year 7 B.C.

Then Herod was sorely perplexed by doubts as to whom he should name as his successor. Antipater had failed to

please him. His enemies (and doubtless he had many in his father's household) whispered in the ear of the old king that he had been heard to say that his father lived too long. The complete absence of natural affection which characterized that court brought things to such a pass that it was impossible for any one to feel sure of safety; everybody tried to exterminate whomsoever he considered a rival.

In vain Augustus and high Roman officials tried to infuse a little reason into this world of intrigue and revenge. At one time Herod thought of putting to death his sister Salome, the prime mover in all the domestic wickedness of his reign. Antipater too was loaded with chains and his execution was resolved upon.

While this went on Herod became very ill. He felt that he must die. Then he became a prey to contending furies. Every day he altered his will, as contrary suspicions succeeded each other. In general his favor rather inclined towards the children he had had by Malthace, a Samaritan woman. At one moment he was disposed to name Antipas, his youngest son, as his successor. Then his mind changed. It was dangerous to approach him. What irritated the dying monarch most of all was to think that his subjects desired his death.

It may have been about this time that he ordered the massacre of the babes at Bethlehem, for the chronologists who adopted the birth of Christ as the beginning of the Christian era were not exact, and our system of Christian chronology was not fixed until the sixth century. Herod died about five years before the received date of the birth of Christ,[1] which event and the massacre at Bethlehem must have taken place during his last illness.[2] Herod's body-guard, composed of Germans, Thracians, and Galatians, was

[1] Kitto's "Cyclopædia of the Bible" says: "The birth of the Saviour of the world probably took place somewhat earlier than the date which is usually assigned to it. Usage, however, has long fixed the era to which it gave rise as the Christian Era."

[2] Within the last ten years archæological and epigraphic discoveries have gone far to solve the difficulties caused by commentators on the second verse of St. Luke's second chapter. We

doubtless employed in this massacre, as it was in many others, but its bloodiest service was performed when the hope that Herod's end was near inspired two fanatical doctors of the Law to incite their scholars to tear down a golden eagle, which had been placed, as a sign that the Temple

know now that "enrolments," as preliminary to taxation, were made throughout the Roman Empire, by command of Augustus, every fourteen years. We have the record of such enrolments in Egypt. We have evidence that the same enrolment took place in parts of Syria in 7 B. C. We can easily infer that Herod, well knowing what opposition would be stirred up to a census taken among the Jews, would make use of all his influence at Rome to postpone the enrolment, and finally to have it made, not in the Roman fashion, but by tribes and families, as it was in some other places in the empire. Therefore Joseph and his wife went up to Bethlehem, their family city, "to be taxed," or rather to be "enrolled" as preliminary to taxation; for the earliest "taxing" in Palestine did not take place till fourteen years later, when Herod was dead, and his kingdom had become a Roman province. Then insurrections took place all over Judea. This taxing was enforced by Quirinius (called Cyrenius, as a surname in recognition of his services in Cyrene), who was then "governor of Syria." But it is difficult to reconcile this with the assertion of St. Luke that Quirinius, the Governor of Syria, had charge of the taxing or enrolment in Galilee fourteen years earlier.

The tombstone of this brilliant personage, discovered at Tivoli in 1764, records his triumphs, and adds that he twice governed Syria as legate (or deputy) of the divine Augustus. During the years 6, 5, and 4 B. C. Quirinius was employed in guerilla warfare with a barbarous tribe, the Homondenses, on the near frontier of Galilee. While engaged on this service his authority in the district where he was sent to rule, superseded that of the actual governor of Syria, and while engaged in this campaign, or rather after he had brought it to a close, it is reasonable to imagine that his services may have been invoked by Herod, who was unwillingly obliged to carry out the imperial enrolment. That enrolment, in Palestine, however, does not seem to have gone far. We read that Joseph and Mary travelled to Bethlehem, but we hear of no disturbances provoked by the enrolment. Nothing was probably attempted in southern Palestine. It was beyond the jurisdiction of Quirinius. But in the year 8 A. D., the periodic year of enrolment it became the duty of that officer to enforce taxation all over Palestine, from Galilee to Judea. Great was the emotion it excited. To pay taxes to the Romans was a sign that Jewish independence was at an end. For these particulars, and much other information on the same subject, see "Was Christ born in Bethlehem? A Study on the Credibility of St. Luke," by W. M. Ramsay, M. A., D. C. L. 1898.

was under Roman protection, over the principal gate of the sacred building. The young men did this in broad daylight, hacking the eagle to pieces with their swords. For this, the two doctors and forty young men were arrested. Herod called an assembly in the theatre, and was so eager for their conviction that he had himself carried thither in a litter. He insisted that no mercy should be shown to the culprits, who joyfully met death in the spirit of martyrdom. Their leaders were burned alive, and the high-priest, who had not sufficiently discouraged the uprising, was displaced and superseded.

The king's malady made frightful progress, — the more frightful because it was slow, and the patient suffered great agony. He was taken to the waters of Callirhoë, to the fortress of Machærus, and was made to take baths of hot oil at Jericho. But death was upon him. In his delirium he raved about atrocious deeds by which he might make the Jews weep on the day of his demise; and at one time he tried to kill himself. One night the palace resounded with his howlings. Antipater, who was in a dungeon, heard the sounds, and concluding that they were the customary cries of wailing at a great man's death, tried to persuade his jailer to release him. The man refused his offered bribe, and informed the old king of the request made him. The rage of the dying monarch knew no bounds. Rising upon his elbow, he ordered Antipater to be slain and buried ignominously at Hyrcania. Augustus, who was much disgusted at this sad story, said, on hearing it, "It were better to be such a man's pig than his son."

Herod lived five days after the murder of Antipater. He died at Jericho, and before his death contrived once more to change his will. Archelaus received Judea and the royal diadem, subject to the sanction of the Emperor Augustus; Antipas had the tetrarchies of Perea and Galilee; while Philip was made tetrarch of Trachonitis and the surrounding country. Salome and other relatives were richly provided for, and large legacies were left to Augustus and his daughter Julia.

The funeral ceremonies of King Herod were superb, and were presided over by Archelaus. The burial took place at Herodium, a large and magnificent hunting-seat, well fortified. Some years before, Herod had caused a palace to be built on a long hill about three miles south-east of Bethlehem. The traces of it, which may still be seen, give us the idea of a magnificent place of abode. The hunting in its neighborhood must have been particularly good in the days of Herod, and he was all his life an enthusiastic sportsman.

The body was borne from Jericho to this place on a golden litter, adorned with precious stones. The pall was scarlet, the body was wrapped in purple, the head was bound with a diadem, and surmounted by a golden crown; a sceptre was in the dead man's hand. Members of the family of the deceased were grouped around him. The army followed, divided into its different corps; first the king's household troops, then the Thracians, then the Galatians, then followed the main body of the army as if setting out on an expedition, while five hundred servants bore perfumes. "Herod's Tomb," still shown near Jerusalem, is only a cenotaph. "If," says M. Renan, "Herod's idea of a secular Jewish kingdom could have been carried out, the world, humanly speaking, could have had no Christianity. Israel never afterwards knew the grasp of a hand like Herod's. Herod Antipas, Herod Agrippa, and the Roman procurators were but small obstacles to the development of that internal life whose germ Israel was already bearing in her bosom."

CHAPTER XVI.

ARCHELAUS REIGNS IN JUDEA.

AS we have seen, Herod in his last hours repeatedly altered his will, unable to make up his mind to whom he would bequeath his dominions. However, any testamentary arrangement he might propose on that subject required the consent of the Roman emperor to make it valid.

The genealogy of the Herodian family is very perplexing. Herod left two sons named Philip, — Philip, tetrarch of Trachonitis, whose mother was Cleopatra of Jerusalem, and Herod Philip, son of a second Mariamne. To this Philip his father's final will left no part of his dominions, but he was a man of great wealth, indolent and unambitious, and he was well content to spend his life in luxurious ease in Rome. He had married his half-niece Herodias, granddaughter of the ill-fated Asmonean princess Mariamne, and daughter of Aristobulus, her no less ill-fated son.

Philip the tetrarch was by far the best ruler in the Herodian family. He kept his tetrarchy in comparative peace for thirty-seven years. Very late in life he married Salome, the daughter of Herodias by her first husband. This Salome was the damsel who danced before Herod Antipas, and claimed the head of John the Baptist in a charger. Philip died in the year 34 A. D. at Bethsaida on the eastern shore of the Lake of Galilee, a city he had beautified with Grecian art, and had called Julias in compliment to the daughter of Augustus Cæsar. He left no children, and a few years after his death his dominions were annexed to the province of Syria.

Archelaus seems to have been universally mistrusted.

He was especially unpopular in Jerusalem. He gave magnificent funeral honors to his father Herod, and punctiliously fulfilled all public duties enjoined on him by Jewish Law during the seven days of mourning, but it was at first whispered, and then asserted loudly that while he mourned decorously in public, his nights were passed in wild revelry with boon companions, in the course of which rejoicings for the tyrant's death were not omitted.

Immediately after the funeral of his father, he assembled his soldiers, and read to them King Herod's will. Next day a great feast was prepared in Jerusalem for the populace, after which the multitude was invited to attend him in the Temple. There, clad in white, and seated on a golden throne, he made a speech promising to rule more justly and with less severity than his father had done. His speech was well received. His hearers cheered him. But very soon a long procession of women, children, and old men in deepest mourning appeared before him. They came to demand the deposition and punishment of Joazar the high-priest, the son of Boëthus, who had countenanced the torture and execution of the forty young fanatics who in the last months of Herod's reign had hacked down the golden eagle set up over the principal entrance to the Temple. To this they added a demand for the reduction of taxes, for the liberation of prisoners who had languished long years in Herod's dungeons, and for the punishment of those members of the Sanhedrim who had given their vote for the death sentence passed on the young men who had outraged the emblem of Roman power in their zeal for the Law.

Archelaus, unwilling to begin his reign by destroying the popularity which he flattered himself he was about to win, protested that he could not legally depose the high-priest, remit taxes, or comply with the other demands these people urged on him with threats of violence, until he had been acknowledged king by Augustus Cæsar. He sent centurions repeatedly to allay the excitement, to explain, to implore, and finally to *order* the dispersion of the

crowd. His officers were received with showers of stones. It was the time of the Passover; thousands of strangers had crowded into Jerusalem, some from the rural districts, some from distant lands. They sympathized with the aggrieved relatives of the young disciples of Judas, son of Seraphius, and Matthias, son of Margaloth.

The tumult became so threatening that Archelaus at length sent his guard to disperse the rioters by force. The multitude resisted the soldiers, who at first showed considerable forbearance, but they were overcome, and their commanding officer was dangerously wounded. Then Archelaus, defiant and exasperated, sent all his foreign mercenaries to restore order, and arrest the ringleaders of the revolt. They did so after an indiscriminate massacre. Cavalry were sent out after those who attempted to escape, killed many of them who were Passover pilgrims, and chased numbers into the mountains. Three thousand unarmed persons, it is said, perished that day. No doubt some were present who had come from Egypt, and who, having made their escape (for the Passover services that year were discontinued), at once carried home news of this event, and may have told their story in the ears of Joseph, who, when preparing to return to Bethlehem, "was afraid to go thither," and "turned aside into the parts of Galilee."

Archelaus, leaving mourning, desolation, and fierce wrath behind him in Jerusalem, hurried with all speed to Rome. He took with him his father's friend Nicolaus of Damascus, to plead his cause before Augustus; but at the same time Herod Antipas set out on a like errand to establish the validity of a will prior to his father's last two testaments, which will had left him sole inheritor of his father's dominions.

Herod Antipas, and his orator Irenæus, asserted (and no doubt with truth) that the two later wills had been made under undue influence by a man whose faculties were disordered by delirium.

Archelaus was as little liked and trusted by his kinsfolk

as by the people in Jerusalem. Quitting Judea they all hurried to Rome to take the part of Herod Antipas, — "that fox" who many years afterwards ordered the execution of John the Baptist, and before whom Jesus was brought on the morning of the day of his crucifixion.

Antipas, however, was not in favour with Augustus. He had been educated in Rome, and had there acquired from his contemporaries the name of "the wily sneak." In spite of the combined efforts of the whole Herodian family, and the influence of a large deputation of leading Jews from Palestine, backed by eight thousand of their countrymen already residents in Rome, Augustus, after long delay, sustained the final will of Herod, allowing Archelaus, however, only the dignity of ethnarch, but promising to make him a king if satisfied with his behavior.

The Jewish deputation which had been encouraged to proceed to Rome by Varus, the Governor of Syria, came, not to support the cause of Antipas, but to implore Cæsar to set aside all the Herodian family, and to make Palestine a province of the Roman Empire with the privilege of home rule under its own high-priest, and its Mosaic laws. Such had been virtually the condition of Judea during two hundred years, while the Jews lived comparatively happy and at peace under the kings of Persia. The petitioners had had little doubt that Augustus would at once agree to their proposal, — but he rejected it. Nine years later Judea did indeed become a Roman province, but with no satisfactory guarantees on the subject of home rule.

During the absence of Archelaus his country was in a state of anarchy and insurrection. The Governor of Syria sent Sabinus, a Roman general, with a legion, to secure the treasures left by Herod and to restore order. Sabinus, however, "by his rapacity and extortions, his plunderings and exactions, drove the people of Jerusalem to madness." The Jews rose *en masse*, shut up the Roman garrison with Sabinus in the Castle of Antonia, and besieged them there. From the roofs of the long cloisters, which on three sides enclosed the precincts of the Temple (each cloister being

175 feet long), the men of Jerusalem hurled missiles at the defenders of the castle. These replied with arrows, javelins, and firebrands. The wooden roofs of the cloisters, which were overspread with wax and varnish, soon caught fire. The Jews who were stationed on these roofs, when surrounded by flames and bewildered by smoke, sank down into the burning mass, as the structure which sustained them crumbled beneath their feet; and hundreds perished. Animated by rapacity and fury, the soldiers of Sabinus burst through all obstacles, made their way into the Temple, and plundered on all sides. They even broke into the treasury, from which they obtained an immense booty, giving their commander, as his share of it, four hundred talents ($400,000).

Sabinus, however, did not obtain possession of the city. His legion was forced back into the castle, the siege of which went on. The country was without any regular government. The despotism of Herod was at an end; nothing had taken its place. The whole city was in a state of excitement. Could Simeon and aged Anna have beheld these things? Throughout the world there was a general feeling of expectation and unrest; but this was above all strong in Judea, where men believed their Prophets and felt certain that a Deliverer must be at hand.

Varus with two legions drawn from Syria, and a large body of Arab cavalry made an attempt to succor Sabinus, with whom, however, he was greatly displeased for disobedience to his orders in his dealings with the Jews. He marched on Jerusalem, raised the siege of the castle, and Sabinus, afraid to meet him, stole away to the seacoast, and made his way to Rome.

During this time the decision of Augustus respecting Herod's testament remained suspended, but at length, the last will was sustained. Archelaus, with a revenue of 600 talents, was left to govern Judea. Augustus gave the wealth that Herod's will bestowed upon himself to dower the two unmarried daughters of the deceased prince, retaining nothing but some superb silver plate as a remem-

brance of the magnificent despot, who, in spite of all his faults, had remained faithful to him.

The reign of Archelaus in Judea, which lasted through the childhood of Jesus, was marked by cruelty, injustice, and impiety; but very few particulars of his rule have come down to us. He dismissed Joazar from the office of high-priest, put Eleazar in his place, deposed him, and gave his authority (now wholly ecclesiastical) to one Joshua ben Siè; and, finally, he restored Joazar. We know no reason for these changes. They were brought about probably by bribes.

Archelaus lived much of his time in Jericho in great magnificence, and took pains to promote the cultivation of its palm trees. He divorced his wife and married Glaphyra, daughter of the King of Cappadocia. She had been twice a widow, having been first married to Alexander, half brother of Archelaus, the son of Herod and Mariamne, and secondly to Juba, King of Lybia. Her marriage with Archelaus the Jewish law held to be incestuous, marriage with a deceased brother's wife being prohibited, except when its purpose was to provide heirs for the inheritance of the first husband. Glaphyra had borne two sons to Alexander, who both afterwards became rulers in Armenia.

When Archelaus had reigned nine years, bitter complaints of his administration were made to Augustus, and an order was sent, commanding him to repair at once to Rome. This order reached him as he was presiding at a banquet. It was of course obeyed. His cause was heard before the emperor: his relations as well as his subjects were his accusers, and he was banished to Vienne in the mountains of Dauphiné, a town which, in the middle ages chose for its patron Saint Anthony. The estates of the deposed prince were confiscated, and Judea became a Roman province. With Archelaus "the sceptre departed from Judah," not only from the house of David, but from the Asmonean family, and from the family of Herod. The kings of Judea, with few exceptions, had done no credit to the dignity to which they had been raised, more than a thousand years

before, in opposition to the remonstrances of the Prophet Samuel.

When Herod set out for his interview with Octavius after the battle of Actium, from which he had little hope he would happily return, he had felt compelled to make some change in the Sanhedrim. There was at that time in Jerusalem a Babylonian Jew named Hillel. He had been living in great poverty, but he was of distinguished descent and of sincere piety. Some said his lineage could be traced back to David. He had probably come to Judea with Hananel, who seems to have been an inoffensive man, when he was called by Herod to be high-priest at Jerusalem.

Hillel became a devoted disciple of Shemaiah and Abatalion the Pharasaic leaders. His especial characteristics were loving-kindness, gentleness, firm confidence in God, love of peace, and consideration for others. These were rare qualities in that day. To him is attributed the first utterance of the Golden Rule: "Do not unto others that which thou wouldest not have done unto thee."

This was the man whom Herod chose to be President of the Sanhedrim, the "Senate of the Jews." If strife and division arose, Hillel was always on the side of conciliation. His maxim was that by love men could be best led to fulfil the Law. Other of his maxims were that "he who wishes to raise his name lowers it"; "he who does not seek the Law does not deserve to live"; "he who does not progress in learning retrogrades"; "he who uses the crown of the Law for his own ends, perishes."

These maxims sound like preludes to the teaching of Jesus. But Hillel not only set great value on oral tradition, but he enlarged its influence; though at the same time he endeavored to trace the statutes of the Law back to first principles and to raise their observance out of the narrow circle of tradition and mere custom. In other words, he desired to infuse spirituality into mere observance. One discussion in which he took part was as to what should be done when the evening before the Paschal Feast fell at

sunset on Friday (as it did on the day of our Lord's arrest and crucifixion). Hillel laid down the rule that the Paschal Sacrifice took precedence of Sabbath observance, but custom apparently afterwards sanctioned the eating of the Paschal supper on the Thursday evening.

Associated with Hillel in the Sanhedrim, by Herod's especial desire, was Menahem, an Essene, who, it is said, in Herod's youth prophesied his greatness. But Menahem soon found his position onerous, and resigned in favor of Shammai, who in all respects was the opposite and opponent of Hillel. The two became leaders of two schools among the Pharisees which exerted a powerful influence during the subsequent unsettled and warlike times. "Herod," says Professor Graetz, "had no conception of the forces antagonistic to his house that were quietly developing within the seclusion of the schools."

It was the followers of Shammai whom the Lord denounced as "scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" Shammai was the narrow rigorist incarnate, a man who had no end in life but the literal fulfilment of the Law. Hillel was favorable to proselytes, Shammai looked on proselytes with scorn. As an instance of his strict observance of every jot and tittle of the Law, M. Renan relates that the Sabbath kept him busy all the week. From Wednesday he forbade the sending of a letter because it might chance to reach its destination on the Sabbath Day.

CHAPTER XVII.

GALILEE UNDER HEROD ANTIPAS.

THE system of government applied by the Emperor Augustus to his vast dominions was intended to veil his despotism under old Roman republican forms. The Senate, although it had no real power left, maintained a semblance of influence and authority. The provinces of the empire were divided into Imperial Provinces, whose rulers were under the authority of Augustus himself, and Senatorial Provinces, governed by the Senate under the supreme authority of the Cæsar. All frontier provinces were Imperial. Syria, into which, on the deposition of Archelaus, Judea was incorporated, was a frontier province, and in consequence Judea became burdened with all the grievous weight of military exactions and free quarters for a licentious soldiery. It had a procurator, that is, a Roman ruler, who was a lieutenant of the Governor (or Legate) of Syria. The chief duty of this procurator was to collect the taxes, and to put down public disturbances. The internal administration of government in Judea was, nominally, left to the high-priest and the Great Council, or Sanhedrim. But this state of things did not apply to Galilee, which, when the emperor had given his decision respecting Herod's will, was committed to the government of its tetrarch, Herod Antipas.

A tetrarchy was originally the fourth part of what had been a kingdom. The position of Herod Antipas was in fact not unlike that of a rajah in India under the English Government.

During a sojourn of Herod Antipas in Rome he was the guest of his half-brother Herod Philip, who after his disin-

heritance was content to live in luxury in the Imperial City. The wife of this prince was his half-niece Herodias, the granddaughter of Mariamne. She by no means relished her husband's acquiescence in the fate which made him a quiet citizen. She carried on an intrigue with Herod Antipas while he was a guest in her husband's house. She and her daughter followed him to his tetrarchy, and he promised to divorce his wife, an Arabian princess, and then marry her.

Galilee, which now lies bare and desolate, save for its wilderness of wild flowers, was then the most beautiful and fertile part of Palestine. It was from Galilee that were drawn the descriptions of rural life and Nature in the Canticles. Ruins of its lost cities seem even now almost to touch each other. In spring its hills and fields were carpeted with flowers. Lilies, rhododendrons, and azaleas still grow to the very edge of the beautiful lake, which has now but one crazy boat upon its "gliding waters." [1] Josephus tells us that the Galileans were men brave, energetic, and industrious. They were not, however, held in esteem by the inhabitants of Judea, who were wholly absorbed in their own political quarrels, and in adjusting their habits of every-day life to the requirements of tradition.

There were Pharisees and Sadducees of course in Galilee, both zealous for the observance of the Law, but differing entirely in their religious opinions. It naturally strikes us with some surprise that orthodoxy in the days of our Saviour consisted in strict observance of the minutest parts of the Law as interpreted by tradition, whilst men were permitted the widest latitude of belief, provided they infringed no legal regulations. It was the same thing in Rome. Men there were never questioned concerning their religious *beliefs;* conformity with acts of worship required by the State was all that was asked of them. It was this that made it possible for John the Baptist and our Lord to preach and teach in Galilee and Judea without direct interference on that account from the authorities.

[1] See Edmond Stapfer, Palestine in the time of Christ.

The Sadducees, who had held the high-priesthood and all offices of profit in the decadent days of the Asmonean princes, regained power under the family of Herod. It was easier for a semi-pagan prince to work harmoniously with them than with the Pharisees, who were, however, the patriotic party, the idols of the people, and everywhere enjoyed great influence, especially in Galilee.

The Lake of Gennezareth, the scene of our Lord's early life, and of a large part of his ministry, is about thirteen miles long and seven or eight miles wide. The river Jordan flows through it; its waters, its pebbly beach, its horizon, its shells, and flowers, are now all that remain of the beautiful region associated with so many years of the life of our Saviour. There are no trees now to be seen where Josephus tells us vegetation was once a miracle, combining the fruit trees of both temperate and tropical climes. Indeed, the inhabitants of Jerusalem discouraged the sale of Galilean fruits during the great feasts, lest men should be attracted to their city less by religious motives than by the hope of eating them. Little peninsulas covered with oleanders, tamarinds, and other shrubs, still run out into the lake; some of them indeed look, it is said, like gardens beautiful with grass and flowers.[1] To the north may be seen the snowy crest of Hermon, one of the foot-hills of which is pointed out as the Mount of Transfiguration. Thence westward towards the coast extends a range of mountains.

In the days of which we write Josephus speaks of the climate of Galilee as very temperate. *Now* the country

[1] The lake is subject to sudden, furious gusts of wind. In 1841, I was in an open boat on the Lake of Annecy in Savoy. The day was bright, the waters of the lake were calm, when suddenly a furious wind came down a gully which debouched into the lake; we were in considerable danger; the waves rose, the boat pitched and tossed, our stout rowers were unable to contend against the wind-storm. They made for the nearest point of land, and put us on shore near a lime-kiln, where we dried our clothes, and then tramped back to our hotel. We were told that such a sudden *bourasque* was not uncommon upon lakes, and were reminded of the storm that beset our Saviour and his followers on the Lake of Galilee.

round the lake is in summer like a fiery furnace, and the swarms of mosquitoes are terrible. The destruction of trees has probably had much to do with this change of temperature. Five little towns or villages in which Jesus preached stood on the right bank of the lake: Magdala, Dalmanutha, Capernaum, Bethsaida,[1] and Chorazin. Only one of these can now be identified with certainty. Besides these, Herod Antipas, who had been very friendly with Tiberius during his residence in Rome (although he was never in favor with Augustus) built a beautiful new city on the lake, and called it Tiberias. Its situation was one of exceeding loveliness, and it was not far from the much frequented hot springs of Calirrhoë. Alas! the city for three generations was destined never to be inhabited by strict Jews. Any Jew who, having entered it, came forth incurred the penalty of ceremonial uncleanness. We do not hear that Jesus ever entered its gates. In vain Herod Antipas offered large inducements to those who would inhabit his beautiful city; in vain he built in it a superb synagogue. In digging the foundations of the city workmen had come upon some human bones; it had evidently been a battlefield, or an ancient burial-place. The spot was pronounced unclean. Herod had great difficulty in providing it with inhabitants; he was forced to bribe the lowest of the people to form the laboring portion of its population. Its inhabitants accordingly consisted of officers of his army, Romans, Greeks, and the lax Jews, called in the New Testament the Herodians.

The Herodians were not a religious sect but a political party, ready to relax compliance with the exactions of the Ceremonial Law, like the semi-pagans of the family of Herod. Herod Antipas, however, found it politic to be punctilious in his observance of the Yearly Feasts, to attend which he went up every year to Jerusalem.

He built an arsenal in Sepphoris, which was not situated

[1] There were two Bethsaidas: one on the western shore of the lake in the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas, the other on the eastern shore in the tetrarchy of his brother Philip.

upon the lake. He also rebuilt Beth-Haran, and called it Livias in compliment to the wife of Augustus Cæsar. Philip, the Tetrarch of Trachonitis, built in his own dominions on the frontier of Galilee, Cæsarea Philippi, and called it after the emperor, but, by way of distinction from the older Cæsarea on the sea-coast, he added his own name Philip to that of Cæsarea.

Through Galilee ran the high-road from the sea-coast to Damascus; and an immense deal of traffic and of travel must have passed over it in the early years of our Saviour's life. Galilee had a large mixed population, besides Jews, resident within its borders, and its people had begun to feel something of the same pity felt by Jews in Alexandria for their pagan associates. Many proselytes were made, some of them persons of rank, and some were even Roman officers. But early in the days of Herod Antipas the whole country was thrown into a convulsion.

The great object of the Roman government in every subject province was to impose and to collect taxes. From the subject kingdoms or tetrarchies this tribute was required, and as it was to be raised directly from the people, "there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed."[1]

This decree of the emperor concerning taxation has imposed great difficulties upon students of the Bible. It took place, says St. Luke, "when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria." Cyrenius is identified with Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, who in the year eight in the Christian era was made Governor of Syria for the express purpose of carrying out the imperial decree relating to taxation. The solution of the difficulty which seems to place the mission of Quirinius eight years later than what is popularly received as the date of our Lord's birth, is probably that in the

[1] According to recent discoveries we are led to believe that a census to form the basis of this taxation was made throughout the Roman Empire every fourteen years; that the first attempt to make this enrolment in Syria took place about 6 B.C. But the matter was subsequently laid aside for fourteen years at the suggestion or request of Herod.

latter months of the life of Herod, Quirinius, who we know had held many high offices under the Roman government, was associated with Sentius Saturninus, Governor of Syria, in an attempt to take a census of the Jewish people, preliminary to an estimate on their property, and as a basis for the capitation tax; but in order to infringe as little as possible on Jewish prejudices (for it was well known that the census would be bitterly opposed by the Jews) it was not carried on in the usual Roman fashion, but, according to Jewish custom, each householder was summoned to appear in the town to which his family originally belonged.[1] Possibly this census-taking did not at that time go very far, as we do not hear of any tumults it excited in Judea, but the whole country for other causes was, as we know, disquieted, and Quirinius may have suspended his labors. At any rate, A. D. 6 he was made Proconsul of Syria, with especial directions to carry out the taxation plan.

The census for taxation, when at last attempted by Quirinius, was met by the most furious opposition in Galilee, where Judas, a descendant of that Hezekiah — patriot or robber — whose destruction was one of the earliest public acts of Herod the Great, resolved to play the same part as the Maccabees of old. His followers took their name from the dying exhortation of old Mattathiah to his five valiant sons: "Be ye zealots for the Law, and sacrifice your lives for it." They called themselves Zealots,[2] and they were afterwards joined by the Sicarii, so called from *sicæ*, the curved daggers that they carried under their cloaks, with which they were ready, whenever opportunity offered, to assassinate those whom they considered the enemies of their religion.

In Galilee immense numbers of men enrolled themselves

[1] The local customs and observances of the Law, laden by traditions (hedged about by traditions as the Jews themselves said), must have been as perplexing, and as full of occasions of giving offence, as the laws of caste and caste customs are to English rulers in India.

[2] Possibly the Apostle Simon Zelotes, of whose history so little is recorded in the New Testament, may have been one of the Zealots before he became a disciple.

as Zealots, each pledging himself by a solemn oath to five things: 1. To acknowledge God as the sole King of the Jews, and Sovereign of the land. 2. To reject, resist, and despise all other temporal authorities. 3. To consider all means lawful that might destroy the authority of Rome. 4. To sacrifice not only their own lives, but the lives of those dear to them, or dependent on them, if it should be necessary, to recover the liberty of the people and to re-establish the Law of Moses. 5. To make no peace with the Romans or with any false Jews, their allies.[1]

In the rural districts of Judea the prudence of the high-priest Joazar seems to have kept the populace from any outbreak, but in Jerusalem the Zealots stirred up the fiercest opposition.

In Galilee the bands of Judas with whom was associated Zadok, a Pharisee, waged a guerilla warfare with a power they were too weak to meet boldly in the field. They found shelter in caverns and among inaccessible rocks, and when opportunity offered they sallied forth to do what harm they could to Romans, and to destroy such Jews as were their friends and allies. They cared not for their own lives, — they had sworn to sacrifice them in the cause of nationality; they had sworn, too, that no foreigner should bear rule in Judea or in Galilee. Guerillas, as we know, whether in Spain among the mountains of the Asturias, or in the hills and woods of Cuba, or of Luzon, can long resist the best-laid schemes of a regular army. Tens of thousands of Jews before long joined the brotherhood of Zealots.

Meantime Quirinius, ignoring Rome's obligations to Joazar, deposed him from the high-priesthood, and put in his place Ananus — Annas in the New Testament, Hanan in Hebrew. It took Quirinius about four years to complete his registration and assessment. He then de-

[1] It chanced that just before writing these lines, a friend had been reading to me Scott's "Old Mortality," and I was astonished — having my mind full of the subject of the Zealots — to see how exactly their sentiments and those of the Covenanters and Cameronians of the year 1685 seemed to correspond.

parted to Antioch, leaving Coponius as the provincial governor of Judea. Coponius was succeeded by Marcus Ambivius, who was replaced by Annius Rufus. Each governed Judea for about a year, but in A. D. 14 the Emperor Augustus died, and was succeeded by Tiberius, whose policy, as regarded the governors of his provinces, showed far more consideration for his subjects than that of his great predecessor.

He compared a Roman province to the poor man in a familiar fable, who, wounded and bleeding, lay by the wayside covered with flies; a kindly passer-by offered to drive them away, but he replied: "These flies have been glutted; drive them away and they will only be replaced by a more hungry swarm." During his reign, therefore, there were in Judea only two Roman proprætors: Valerius Gratus (A. D. 14), and Pontius Pilate (A. D. 25). The administration of Gratus was remarkable chiefly for the frequent changes that he made in the high-priesthood. He deposed Annas, then substituted Ismael ben Fabi; then gave the office to Eleazar, the son of Annas, deposed him, and substituted one Simon ben Kamhith, and lastly, after these annual changes, appointed the son-in-law of Annas, Joseph Caiaphas, in A. D. 18. Caiaphas held office eighteen years, assisted, as appears from the New Testament, by Annas, his father-in-law.

Tiberius in his relations with the Jews comes out far better than he does when we read of him in Roman history. We do not know what induced him favorably to regard that people; and yet during his reign, while he was under the malign influence of Sejanus, a terrible massacre and persecution of the Jews took place in Rome. Some scandals connected with the worship of Isis, which was then becoming fashionable among illustrious Roman women, caused the crucifixion of the priests of the Egyptian goddess, and the destruction of her temple. The statue of the goddess was torn down and thrown into the Tiber. Judaism was also an Oriental religion; it had gained a foothold in Roman fashionable life, especially among Roman

women. The Jews were confounded with the worshippers of Isis. They were expelled from Rome, where they had enjoyed peculiar privileges from the days of Cæsar. Some thousands of their young men were drafted into the army, and sent to serve in Sardinia, an island notorious at that day for its unhealthy climate. But on the downfall and death of Sejanus, Tiberius issued another edict favorable to the Jews.

Meantime, Herod Antipas in his Galilean dominions lived a life of luxury and dissoluteness, annoyed from time to time by raids of the outlawed Zealots, who had become a turbulent banditti, but whom he never seems to have made any sustained effort to put down. He was no doubt also greatly annoyed by the discontent and ambition of Herodias, who had set her heart on seeing him a king. She and her daughter Salome were living in his palace, and the importunities of Herodias at last caused him to risk the enmity of Hareth (or Aretas) King of the Arabians, whose dominions touched his frontier near the wonderful fortress of Machærus built by Herod the Great. Antipas determined to divorce his wife, the daughter of this Hareth, but she, having received warning of the degradation about to be put upon her, requested permission to visit her father on the frontier of his dominions. No sooner had they met than Hareth declared war against Herod. About this time occurred the death of John the Baptist, for Herod had hurried to Machærus not only as his base of operations against his outraged father-in-law, but possibly that he might not be far from Enon, the spot where John was preaching and baptizing, and where he was collecting crowds, who, under a trusted leader, might prove dangerous.

He therefore caused the arrest of John the Baptist, as a matter of precaution, but being greatly impressed by his personality, and not a little afraid of him as possibly a successor of the ancient prophets, he sent for him often to his presence, and heard him gladly. John meantime, though confined in one of the dungeons cut out of living

rock, over which were built the royal apartments where Herod toyed with his women and banqueted with his officers, was permitted to hold free communication with his favorite disciples, until the day came when Herod on his birthday made a great feast, and Salome, though a princess, danced before him and his officers. We know the sad remainder of the story, and how Herod, though no doubt well accustomed to cruelty, laid up remorse, which lasted him the remainder of his days.

The rash words which resulted in John the Baptist's death were not the only ones which, when his reason was obscured by wine and revelry, brought Herod into trouble. We shall take occasion in the next chapter to tell at length the singular story of Herod Agrippa — father of the King Agrippa who sat on the judgment seat with Porcius Festus, and heard the defence of Saint Paul; but a few words must be here said of him in connection with the fate of Herod Antipas.

Agrippa, the son of Aristobulus and grandson of Herod and Mariamne, had been a spendthrift in his early days, but all his life he was highly esteemed by the great. Encumbered with debts and indeed utterly destitute, he left Rome after the death of his friend Drusus, the son of Tiberius, because the emperor could not bear the sight of any man who had been intimate with his son. After many adventures his destitution compelled him to seek help from his sister Herodias, then the wife or paramour of Herod Antipas. Herodias listened to his request, and persuaded Herod to extend favor and hospitality to her brother. Herod even made him governor of his new city of Tiberias. But one day, in his cups, and surrounded by his courtiers, he began to taunt Agrippa with being the recipient of his charity. This was too much for the proud spirit of a man who had long considered himself in every way Herod's superior. He at once left the court of Galilee, and after various changes of fortune, in the year 37 A.D. returned from Rome to the East, having been promoted to succeed Philip, the Tetrarch of Trachonitis, with the additional

honor of the title of king, and other marks of the imperial favor.

It incensed Herodias to see the man who had once depended on herself and her husband for daily bread a crowned and honored king, while her husband was only a paltry tetrarch. She therefore importuned Herod, until he consented to go to Rome with her, endeavor to ruin his rival, and at the same time obtain like honors for himself. But Agrippa, who well knew how high he himself stood in the favor of the new Emperor Caius (better known as Caligula), had little fear of ruin. He sent a trusty freedman to the emperor to make counter charges against Herod Antipas. When the tetrarch appeared before Caligula (not then insane) he was questioned concerning Agrippa's charges. Antipas denied that he was in alliance with the Parthians, but could not deny that he had arms and armor for 40,000 men laid up in Sepphoris. This admission was taken as a proof of guilt. Herod Antipas was banished to Lyons, and his dominions were added to those of King Agrippa, who then became Governor of the Temple at Jerusalem, and King of Galilee, Samaria, and Perea, in addition to the districts lying beyond the Jordan.

All the wealth of Herod Antipas was confiscated by Caligula, but out of consideration for Herodias, as the sister of his friend Agrippa, he restored to her her own possessions, and offered to except her from the decree of banishment. But Herodias was faithful to the man she had twice ruined. She preferred to follow him into Gaul. One Roman writer says that Herod was slain by order of Caligula, but Josephus tells us that eventually he went to Spain and died in exile.

The supreme moment of Herod's life had occurred when, four years before his banishment, he went up to Jerusalem to the Passover and there stood face to face with the Lord of Life and Glory. This man, whom he had dreaded, of whose works and miracles in Galilee he had heard, not only from common report, but from members of his own household,

stood before him, bound, in the power of the Roman soldiers, and vociferously accused by the men who composed the Great Council of the Jews. The life of this wondrous prophet hung on his decision. Herod expected that he would work some wonder to save his life, but Jesus remained dumb. "Baffled by a silence more kingly than his own many words," says Canon Farrar, "the patience of the frivolous princeling gave way. He at once avenged and disgraced himself by handing over Jesus to the coarse mockery of his barbarian body-guards. Safe, as he now fancied himself, from supernatural retribution, he treated Jesus with elaborate contempt, and tried to make a mockery of him. So he sent for some of his own cast-off royal apparel for the man who was accused of desiring to make Himself a king, and when the soldiers had arrayed Jesus in it, he sent Him back to Pilate, not venturing to declare Him guilty, but with deep policy, and perhaps one little grain of conscience, desiring to indicate that he regarded Him as an impostor, only worthy of disdainful ridicule." [1]

[1] Dean Farrar, The Herods.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PONTIUS PILATE.

PONTIUS PILATE! How little could the stern, fierce Roman procurator have foreseen, when he seated himself upon his portable throne of judgment, brought outdoors to the Pavement (Gabbatha) that the accusing Jews might not defile themselves by entering the palace of a pagan on the eve of the Passover, — that for unnumbered years *his* would be the sole name of any Roman dignitary known to masses of the human race in all parts of the wide world, — that children and uneducated peasants who now know nothing of Tiberius Cæsar, nor of the great Augustus, nor have even heard of the Olympian Jove, would, together with the great ones of the earth, repeat weekly — daily — from their earliest infancy the name of "Pontius Pilate, the governor!"

Yet Pontius Pilate was a man apparently obscure by birth, of fate uncertain; and the world knows nothing of his antecedents before the day when he succeeded Valerius Gratus as Procurator of Judea and Samaria, under the official supremacy of Vitellius the Roman legate in Syria, a man hardly less famed for luxury and gluttonness than his son, who afterwards, for a short time, became a Roman emperor.

Pontius Pilate belonged to none of the Great Roman families, he apparently left no descendants, it is very doubtful whence he derived his names. The Roman practice was to write first what we should call the "given" name, then the family name, and lastly such distinctive surname as the person himself had acquired. We do not know the "given name" of Pontius Pilate, but he must

have distinguished himself either as a general, or by personal feats of arms in Pontus, for he was of the equestrian order.

There was a tradition in the middle ages that he came from Gaul; and Vienne, where he was believed to have died, was assigned him as the place of his nativity.

Another tradition says that he was a Teuton, sent to Rome with Tyrus, a captive German, who was detained there as a hostage; that he afterwards joined the 22d legion, and was employed in wars in Pontus, that his name Pilate was either given him in recognition of his skill with the *pilum*, or javelin, or was derived from *pilatum*, the head-dress worn by a freed slave.

These traditions are probably false. They are mentioned by the Roman historian. Pilate, however, was not an official of sufficient consequence to obtain much personal attention from contemporary writers.

Appointed by the influence of Sejanus, the unworthy favorite of Tiberius Cæsar, — a man who had a bitter hatred of the Jews, Pilate probably entered on his office strongly prejudiced against the nation he was sent to govern. Towards their national customs and their Law "hedged about" with puerile and incomprehensible traditions, he probably felt, as some eighteenth-century Englishman appointed to control a province in India may have felt, in relation to the minutiæ it was necessary to observe in matters of caste and religion. He was resolved to pay no heed to Jewish scruples. They were the superstitious follies of fanatics. He would break them down at once, and he was determined to begin by discarding the more prudent policy of his predecessors.

Gratus, whom he succeeded, had had a comparatively quiet ten years' administration. He resided in Cæsarea, a Jewish-Roman city, and had avoided all collision between his troops and the turbulent Zealots of Jerusalem. He chiefly interested himself in acquiring wealth, and obtained it through a rapid succession of high-priests, of whom in ten years he appointed four, the last of whom, as has been

said, was Joseph Caiaphas. Each one obtained his position by bribery, records of which still remain.

In pursuance of a policy probably determined on beforehand by Pilate and his patron, the new procurator decided to transfer the headquarters of his army from Cæsarea to his own winter residence at Jerusalem. Up to that time the Romans had refrained, out of consideration for the prejudices of the Jews, from bringing their eagles into the Sacred City.

The Roman standards were surmounted by an eagle of gold or silver, borne on the point of a spear. The bird had outspread wings, and a thunderbolt in its claws; below it on the ensign were the letters S. P. Q. R. (Senatus Populus Que Romanus), to which was added a banner with an embroidered likeness of the reigning emperor. When the army was on its march, the eagles were always borne before the legions. When a camp was formed the eagles were planted before the prætorium, — the tent, or residence, of the commanding-general. The eagle on the summit of an ivory staff was also the symbol of consular authority.

To bring such eagles into the Holy City and within sight of the Temple, was to show contempt for the Second Commandment. Pilate, therefore, resolved to begin his administration by open disregard of this absurd Jewish superstition. His army entered Jerusalem at night, and when morning dawned, the inhabitants of the city awoke to see the Roman eagles planted before the splendid Herodian Palace, which had been assigned to Roman procurators as their residence in the city.

Great was the rage and consternation among all ranks of the people. Some wept, some stormed. Pilate had not come himself to Jerusalem; he was still in Cæsarea. Crowds of Jews, not only from Jerusalem but from all parts of the country, hurried thither, imploring him to save their city from profanation and disgrace.

For five days they howled and pleaded round his residence; then he lost patience. He ordered them to

assemble in an open square, surrounded them with his soldiers, and mounting a rostrum made them a speech. He told them that if they did not instantly return to Jerusalem, and leave him in peace, he would order his cohorts to cut them down. These troops were ready at hand, lying in wait with weapons concealed under their mantles. But the Jews, inspired with the spirit of the Maccabees, answered the procurator that they would rather die than sanction idolatry and disobedience to the commandment of their God. As the soldiers advanced to slay them they fell on the ground, laid their necks bare, and prepared to receive the death-stroke.

Then Pilate relented. Either he began to consider what a revolt his massacre of this large body of supplicants would raise throughout Judea, or a certain natural kind-heartedness in him was stirred; for, like Louis Napoleon in our own day, he was apparently averse to bloodshed committed in his presence, though insensible to what might be spilt by his orders elsewhere; lastly, — perhaps most probably, — a deputation at that opportune moment reached him from Jerusalem, bearing a large bribe from men of wealth and influence. By whatever motive he may have been moved (Josephus thinks it was by admiration for the courage and constancy of the Jews), he appeared to relent, and ordered the offensive standards to be removed from Jerusalem.

His next outrage to Jewish feeling was in connection with his undertaking a work which we of the nineteenth century cannot but consider praiseworthy. He began to construct an aqueduct to bring a supply of water about twenty-five miles [1] into Jerusalem. This should have been considered a beneficial public enterprise, but he resolved to appropriate to the work part of the treasures laid up in the Temple. Some portion of the sum obtained ostensibly for this purpose, the excited population of Jerusalem was confident he would transfer to his own purse. They assembled before him as he was seated in state on his tribu-

[1] Graetz says, from a spring four geographical miles from Jerusalem.

nal. They accused him of peculation, and overwhelmed him with abuse. Again Pilate's patience gave way. He made a signal to his soldiers to go in among the crowd, and compel them by force to disperse. The soldiers, inflamed by hatred against the Jews, and exasperated by the insults that the populace had heaped upon their general, showed no mercy. They butchered the people right and left.

Such tumults were of frequent occurrence. Josephus, Saint Luke, and the Talmud, mention several. In all such riots the Galilean Zealots, who were in large numbers at Jerusalem, took a leading part. Pilate complained of this to Herod Antipas, but Herod was quite incapable of controlling his fanatical subjects, and Pilate therefore took upon himself to act with authority in Galilee, at which Herod was indignant, and it led to much ill will between tetrarch and procurator.

It was in the nineteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, in the consulship of Rufinius and Rubellio (for a show of consulship was still kept up in Rome) in the 4th year of the 202d Olympiad and probably in the spring of the year A. D. 33 or 34 (as we reckon time), that occurred the great event of Pilate's life. It is not my place to enter at large into the terrible story that we all know so well.

Pilate had come up to the Passover at Jerusalem dreading a tumult, for which he was not well prepared. He was not accompanied by a large number of soldiers, and he seems to have sent to his superior, Vitellius, for reinforcements, which did not arrive. Vitellius was unfriendly to Pilate; he blamed him for not preventing tumults in Jerusalem by conciliating the chief-priests and the leaders of the people, — a policy he himself subsequently adopted, when, a few years later, he undertook the management of the affairs of the Jews.

Many have wondered why, since the Sanhedrim afterwards ordered the stoning of St. Stephen, it did not execute sentence on our Saviour, without handing him over to the authority of the Romans. It has been suggested that pos-

sibly the Sanhedrim had not the power of life and death while a procurator was resident in Jerusalem; but the more probable reason is that, by their law, cases involving the death sentence could only have that sentence pronounced by the Great Council sitting within the limits of the Temple. Jesus, as we know, was "led away to Annas first," and then afterwards had his first trial before the priests and elders (that is, the Sanhedrim) in the house of Caiaphas.

There is every reason to believe that Pilate made an official report on the subject of our Lord's crucifixion to the Roman authorities, and there is also reason to think that he wrote privately an account of it to the emperor. The emperors were in the habit of receiving such letters from officials in the provinces. Herod Antipas at one time carried on a voluminous private correspondence with Tiberius, and thereby incurred the rage and jealousy of the Roman legate in Syria.

The documents called the "Acts of Pilate" were appealed to by Justin Martyr in confirmation of his statements concerning Christ, when he made his Apology for himself and his fellow-Christians before the Emperor Antoninus Pius and the Senate at Rome (about A. D. 140). Three times he alludes to these documents as state papers that could be easily consulted by those whom he addressed. When speaking of the miraculous works of healing done by Christ, and of wonders that accompanied the crucifixion, he says: "And we can learn from the Acts composed during the governorship of Pontius Pilate that these things really happened."

Again, "That He performed all these things you may easily be satisfied from the Acts of Pontius Pilate."

Forty years later, Tertullian, speaking of the crucifixion, says: "All this was reported to the emperor, at that time Tiberius, by Pilate."

And Eusebius, writing at the close of the third century, says also: "According to an ancient custom prevalent among the rulers of the nations to communicate important occurrences to the emperor, Pontius Pilate transmitted

to Tiberius an account of the circumstances concerning the resurrection of our Lord."

There must therefore have been state papers in existence at one time containing Pilate's account of the execution of our Saviour. But in the year 311 when the Emperor Maximian was engaged in persecuting the Christians, he caused forged "Acts of Pilate" to be distributed throughout his empire, to cast discredit on the statements made by Christians. It is probable that the original report and letters were then destroyed.

The "Acts of Pilate" that subsequently long circulated among the early Christians, and were incorporated into the Gospel of Nicodemus, probably are not genuine. It seems as if some Christian, regretting the disappearance of the real documents, had endeavored to supply their place from his remembrance, supplementing his own recollection by passages extracted from the Gospel of Saint John. I think this will seem clear to any one who reads the "Acts of Pilate." They were translated and published by W. O. Clough of Indianapolis in 1885, under the title of "Reports, Letters and Acts of Pontius Pilate." When first brought to general notice by the learned Dr. Constantine Tischendorf, who died in 1874, and who believed them to be genuine, they were exhaustively reviewed by Dr. Lardner, who decided that "it must be allowed by all that Pontius Pilate composed some memoirs concerning our Saviour, and sent them to the emperor," but, he adds, "the 'Acts of Pontius Pilate' and his letters to Tiberius which we now have are not genuine, but manifestly spurious."

With respect to the later administration of Pilate, there is little more to be said. Before the Passover in the year 36 he was deposed by Vitellius, Legate of Syria, and sent in disgrace to be examined at Rome. This time he had stirred up the enmity of the Samaritans, a people for the most part patiently submissive under Roman rule, but they were greatly excited about this time by a fanatical impostor, who said it had been revealed to him that Moses (who never crossed the Jordan) had hidden certain golden vessels

upon Mount Gerizim. Armed multitudes collected to search for these vessels, and Pilate, dreading disturbances in a new quarter, sent soldiers to disperse them. As usual, the soldiery interpreted their orders to mean official leave to massacre. They attacked the village in which the Samaritan treasure-seekers had bivouacked, and destroyed it utterly. Many were killed and numbers were made prisoners. Pilate selected every man of note or wealth, and had all of them beheaded. The provincial government of Samaria made bitter complaints to Vitellius, who was quite disposed to listen to them, especially as Sejanus, the patron of Pilate, was now dead.

Vitellius had the year before gone himself to Jerusalem, and had there not only gained the good-will of the priests and elders by what they considered a concession of immense value, but that of the inhabitants by a remission of taxes. The concession was the custody of the official garments of the high-priest, without which he could not be inaugurated. These had for many years been kept in a room locked and guarded in the castle of Antonia, whence they were delivered to the priests a week before the installation of a new high-priest, and returned by them after the ceremony. Vitellius permitted them to be stored in a chamber of the Temple, to the immense satisfaction of the whole nation of the Jews. He also deposed Caiaphas, and replaced him by a son of Annas named Jonathan.

When Pilate, after his removal from office, reached Rome, Tiberius was dead. He remained some time in prison; his cause was apparently never heard. Then he was banished, as Herod Antipas had been, to Vienne in Dauphiné. One wonders if they met there, and spoke together of the terrible event in which they had been associated!

Tradition says that Pilate committed suicide. A legend connects his fate with a mountain, Mount Pilatus, near Lucerne. It is said that, overwhelmed by remorse, — and if we may accept the feelings expressed in his letter to Tiberius as at all genuine, he may have spent his latter days

as a victim of supernatural terrors, — he lived as a hermit for some time on the mountain, and at last drowned himself in a small lake on the summit, probably the crater of an extinct volcano.

Execrated as his memory has been by both Jews and Christians, we can hardly at this day consider him a worse man than other officials of his class and time. Under the influence of personal fear, — fear of Vitellius, fear of the emperor, and fear of the Jews, — he ordered, against his conscience, the execution of the Saviour of mankind. But his conduct on the occasion was less abominable than that of the priests and elders composing the Sanhedrim. The blood of Jesus rests upon their heads, and it is thus that the apostles always speak of it, extenuating so far as they may, the conduct of Pontius Pilate.

He made eight separate efforts to save Jesus. First, he took Him apart into the Prætorium, leaving the howling crowd of His accusers on the "Pavement," and examined Him privately as to who he was. Secondly, finding that He came from Galilee, he tried to shake off responsibility, and perhaps give the prisoner a better chance for life, by sending Him to Herod. Thirdly, when Herod sent Him back as an impostor, having evidently been relieved of the fear he had entertained of Him, Pilate offered to scourge Him and release Him. Fourthly, he proposed to substitute Him for Barabbas. Fifthly, he washed his hands before the multitude, and declared the prisoner innocent. Sixthly, he directed Him to be scourged, and brought Him forth, bleeding, and wearing the crown of thorns, to excite if possible the pity of His accusers. Seventhly, he took Him apart for another private interview; but this time Jesus would not answer any of his questions. Eighthly he made a last appeal, and was answered by the cry, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend!"

This decided him; but he was bitterly resentful against the hated men who had forced him to violate not only his conscience, but his sense of justice as understood at Rome.

Pilate's wife was named Procula. We know nothing of



CALIGULA.

her face, nor of her history. It was at one time decreed that an imperial permission was necessary to make it possible for a Roman official to take his wife with him to the provinces; but this rule had been relaxed, and, without being abrogated, was commonly forgotten.

We have here presented the best case possible for the man who outraged justice and conscience from base fear. To be sure "in ignorance he did it," though he was awed by the majesty of Jesus, and was deeply conscious that he himself was basely doing wrong. All men for eighteen hundred years have never spoken of him but with opprobrium.

Tacitus says that, by orders from Pontius Pilate, Christ, the founder of the Christian sect, was executed. Philo accuses Pilate of corruption, insolence, rapine, violence, incessant murders without even the formality of a trial, and in general with endless and intolerable cruelties. King Agrippa the First bitterly accused him before Caligula as inflexible, imperious, and implacably harsh. Josephus speaks of him with equal bitterness. Since this is the character given of him by both Jews and pagans, we need not wonder that Christians of the middle ages execrated his memory. Indeed, the mildest judgments that have been passed on him have been by an apostle and by modern Christians.

Here is how his character is summed up in a sermon on "Pontius Pilate the Governor":[1] "What forced him to deliver Jesus to be crucified? The mass of the Jews, both mob and rulers, rising about him in fierce tumult, and the words, 'If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend;' — *this* forced him; this rumor he feared, for he was already an unpopular ruler, and he dreaded his jealous master at Rome; so he gave way. He gave way, but with no little feeling against the wretches who had forced his conscience; and though he had, I think, some real sense of the intrinsic dignity of Christ, and had certainly a bitter

[1] In a volume called "Bible Characters," by Alexander G. Mercer, D.D., published by G. P. Putnam's Sons in 1885.

hatred and contempt for the Jews, a hate sharpened by his fears, he *must* do it, he thinks, and he does it. Still, he will wreak his bitterness on them in some way. So he takes the man they have cast out as a malefactor, and proclaims him before them all as their king. 'Behold your king!' This bleeding, pitiable man is a fit king for you. 'Shall I crucify your king?' he asks them with a sneer. And lastly, he set upon the cross these words, written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin (the only languages in that day in the whole civilized world): 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews!'"

These views of Pilate's fears and feelings are in exact accordance with what we find in the Report and letters attributed to the procurator himself in the "Acts of Pontius Pilate."

We cannot, I think, accept these "Acts of Pilate," as we have them, as original documents, but we may at least believe that they are founded on true documents that were known to exist in the early ages of Christianity, — state papers that were destroyed or lost by about the beginning of the fourth century after the death of Jesus.

CHAPTER XIX.

KING HEROD AGRIPPA.

THE history of Herod Agrippa is a singular one to be met with in connection with Bible narratives. He was a man of fashion, who overtopped his countrymen; a courtier who stood high in the favor of three emperors; a man of cultivated tastes; of amiable disposition; a delightful companion; admired and appreciated in the highest circles of Roman society; a reckless spendthrift, careless of incurring debts; a Jew who, although he was always loyal to the observances of his national religion, was probably wholly wanting in religious faith and feeling. His life was full of adventures, of changes of fortune, as surprising as those in a fairy tale; he sank suddenly into extreme poverty, and rose as suddenly to wealth; insult and contempt he exchanged for honors and popularity; he was suddenly delivered from chains, and from the prospect of immediate death, to enjoy kingly dignity. Everywhere he made friends by the charm of his manners, and the desire which at all times possessed him of doing what would be best pleasing to the men around him, and at last upon the very soil where he had been cruelly taunted with his poverty and dependence, he appeared at some public spectacle so gorgeously arrayed and so noble of presence, that his flatterers shouted as he addressed them: "'It is the voice of a god and not of a man!' And immediately an angel (messenger) of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms and gave up the ghost."

"We see him," says Canon Farrar, in his recent book upon the Herods, "pass at a bound from squalor to splendor, and back again from splendor to squalor; now in

the plethora of wealth, now driven to the verge of suicide by abject poverty. We see him in contact with many of the chief cities, and many of the chief personages of his age; now grossly insulted at Alexandria, and now rapturously applauded at Jerusalem; running away at Jamnia from debts that he could not pay, and then deciding the whole destiny of the empire of Rome; contumeliously imprisoned by the Emperor Tiberius, and extravagantly honored by the Emperor Caligula; acting as a Gentile in the amphitheatre at Berytus, and as a Pharisee in the Temple at Jerusalem; beheading James the Apostle for belief in Christ, and himself saluted as a god at Tyre."

Herod Agrippa was a prince of the Asmonean family; he belonged also to the family of Herod. He was grandson of the unhappy Mariamne, the child of her son Aristobulus, after whose execution by his father, Herod Agrippa and his baby brother were sent to be educated at Rome. Their father Aristobulus had married his cousin Berenice, daughter of Herod's wicked sister Salome. Salome's husband was an Arabian prince, Joseph Costobarus. Agrippa was therefore the son of first cousins, and he married Cypros, his own first cousin, who was the offspring of another intermarriage between very near relations.

The children of Aristobulus and his wife Berenice, were Herod Agrippa, an Aristobulus of whom we know very little, Herod, afterwards king of Calchis, and one daughter, Herodias.

When Aristobulus had been put to death, Berenice and her children sought refuge in Rome. Agrippa was then about six years old. Antonia, widow of Drusus, the brother of Tiberius, a man of tried worth and a distinguished general, was the attached friend of Berenice, who, in spite of her descent from Salome, seems to have been a woman of virtue and capacity. The young Jewish prince became the playmate and companion of young Drusus, the son of Tiberius, a lad about his own age. Agrippa, after the death of his mother Berenice, who superintended his affairs, found himself without restraint, a young man of fashion,

delighting in expense, and he began at once to indulge his natural taste for profusion and the gratification of his vanity. The sums expended by courtiers and leading men in Rome, on feasts and bribes and self-indulgences, seem perfectly astounding to us in modern times. Agrippa exceeded other men in his extravagance. We know from one of the Epistles of Horace that Jews of wit, talent, and position were at that time admitted to the intimacy of leading men in Rome. Things changed after the downfall of Jerusalem. Jews were then held to be "the scum of slavery" — servants of a Deity who had shown no ability to defend His Temple and Himself from the power of the mighty majesty of Rome. But Agrippa, by reason of the extravagance which he deemed necessary to keep up his dignity and position, became at last deeply involved in debt, and borrowed from the imperial treasury three hundred thousand drachmæ, about $48,000. The death of young Drusus the son of Tiberius, was a deep grief to his imperial father. He could not endure the presence of any of the young men who had been the companions and associates of his lost son. Agrippa, finding himself excluded from court, and reduced to actual penury, despairing, and dispossessed of all that as he thought made life desirable, determined to seek a hiding place in his own country. He owned a ruined castle in Idumea. Thither he repaired with his wife Cypros, who like all persons admitted to his intimacy was devotedly attached to him. Herod Agrippa during this time of seclusion in Idumea had thought of committing suicide, but by his wife's entreaties, tender care, and fond caresses, he was persuaded to live longer, and to look forward to some change of fortune. Then Cypros, apparently on her own responsibility, wrote to Herodias, her sister-in-law, now the wife of Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee, entreating assistance for her husband. The help thus solicited was not long in reaching the impoverished pair. Herod Antipas sent for Agrippa to come and live with him in Galilee, relieved his immediate wants, and made him governor of Tiberius. But Herod Antipas and

his wife Herodias knew neither delicacy nor generosity. While at a great banquet at Tyre surrounded by his officers and courtiers, Herod, in his cups, began to taunt his brilliant brother-in-law with his poverty, — asserting to his face that he owed his very food to charity. This insult was intolerable to a man of the abilities and antecedents of Agrippa. He flung off his dependence upon Herod, renounced with disdain his favors and his bounty, and made his way into Syria, where Flaccus was then legate, or governor-general. With Flaccus he had formerly been intimate at Rome. But to "climb another's stairs, and eat the bread of dependence watered by salt tears," was as hard for Agrippa as for Dante. Flaccus received him kindly as a suppliant, and invited him to reside in his own palace, where was already a son of his father, Aristobulus by name. There was no good-will between these brothers, and Aristobulus out of jealousy betrayed to Flaccus a scheme Agrippa had formed of getting money out of certain suppliants who were willing to offer him a large bribe to support their cause in an appeal to the Syrian governor. This brought on a quarrel between Flaccus and Agrippa, and it led to the expulsion of the unwelcome guest from Antioch. Agrippa, again a needy fugitive, went to Ptolemais (Acre), where he endeavored to raise money to pay his passage to Italy; and Marsyas, his freedman, managed to procure from another wealthy freedman, who had been formerly the slave of Berenice, a considerable sum. Agrippa's credit, however, was at a low ebb, and his reputation for loose transactions in money matters was so notorious that the freedman to whom Marsyas applied refused at first to lend anything to his principal, asserting that Agrippa already owed him money on a bond, that he could not make him pay. At last, however, he was persuaded to cash Agrippa's note for 20,000 drachmæ, deducting, however, 2500 drachmæ as interest on the loan at twelve and a half per cent. With this money (about $3000) Agrippa went to Anthedon, another seaport on the coast of Palestine, and embarked for Puteoli. But before his ship could put to sea he was

stopped by a band of soldiers sent by Herennius Capito, the Roman governor of a neighboring district, to demand payment of a debt of three hundred thousand drachmæ, which some years before, at Rome, Agrippa had borrowed from the imperial treasury. Agrippa promised to settle the matter at once, and, having by this means gained a few hours, he slipped at night out of the harbor of Anthedon, and by morning was beyond pursuit. He sailed for Alexandria; there he desired Tiberius Alexander, an apostate Jew, then Roman governor in Egypt, to lend him 200,000 drachmæ. But Tiberius, mistrustful of Agrippa's ability to repay this sum, would only lend five talents to Cypros; moved, as he said, by her affection for her husband, and by other instances of her virtue. Cypros, having thus relieved Agrippa's immediate necessities, saw him depart for Italy, while she remained in Egypt, with her children.

When Agrippa reached Puteoli, he wrote to Tiberius who was then at Capreæ. Tiberius received his letter graciously, and invited him to join him, but the day after he had been kindly received by the emperor, Herennius Capito arrived, to charge him with his unseemly evasion of his debt, and with his surreptitious departure from Anthedon.

In this strait Agrippa was saved from poverty and disgrace by Antonia, his mother's friend, niece of Augustus Cæsar, and widow of Drusus, the brother of Tiberius. She lent the young spendthrift three hundred thousand drachmæ, that he might not lose the friendship of the emperor.

This matter being settled, Agrippa was made tutor and especial companion to young Tiberius, son of his early friend Drusus, the lost and lamented son of the unhappy emperor; but he attached himself by preference to Caius (Caligula) grandson of Antonia, — son of Germanicus, now dead and much lamented. He formed a close friendship with this young man, — who was not then the insane monster who afterwards disgraced the throne of Augustus, — and they were constantly together.

It was a time when base informers made large profits,

and the ears of the great were constantly assailed by talebearers. Driving one day with Caius in a chariot, Agrippa chanced to remark that it would be a good thing for Rome, and for themselves, too, if the old emperor were dead, and if Caius were his successor. These words were overheard by Eutychus, Agrippa's charioteer. This man, being afterwards accused by his master of theft, ran away, and being apprehended, begged to be examined before Cæsar, to whom he had something very important to communicate.

It was some time before Tiberius, who hated this business of hearing charges, would examine Eutychus; but at length one day when he was being carried round the amphitheatre at Capreæ in his litter for air and exercise, Antonia begged him to put an end to the anxiety of Agrippa, by hearing what Eutychus wished to communicate. Tiberius, rather testily, sent for Eutychus, heard him, and then went on his way, borne in his litter. As he passed the spot where Agrippa was standing, clad in purple robes, he pointed to him, and gave the order, "Bind that man!" The officer to whom he spoke could not believe his ears. He waited till the emperor was again borne past, and then asked, "Which man?"

In vain Agrippa made protests and supplications; he was taken into custody, and forced to stand in scorching summer sunshine before the prison gates, like any other prisoner. Overpowered by the heat, and by the unforeseen misery of his situation, he begged a slave, who passed him with some water in a vessel, to let him drink. The man at once complied. Agrippa never forgot this service. When he was restored to freedom and prosperity, he bought the slave, set him at liberty, made him his steward, and on his death-bed commended him to his children, in whose service the man acquired wealth, and died at a good old age.

There was another incident which occurred the same day, and is related by Josephus, who from his intimacy with Agrippa II. (son of Herod Agrippa) is probably quite correct in these personal biographical particulars.

A German who was among the prisoners, seeing a man bound, standing in purple robes worn only by princes, asked the soldiers who kept him who that person was. Being told that it was Prince Agrippa he begged to be allowed to speak to him, and this being granted, he exhorted his fellow-sufferer to cheer up, for his calamity would not be of long duration. He claimed the gift of second-sight, and assured the astonished prince, who was not inclined to believe him, that he would thereafter enjoy good fortune and happiness, until the day when he should again see a bird like that, — here he pointed to a small owl perched in the branches of a tree against which the prince was leaning. When such a bird should be seen by him again, he would die five days later. This prophecy had at least the effect of restoring Agrippa's cheerfulness. He laughed at it at the time, but well remembered the prediction when, eight years later, he saw the owl again, perched on a rope over his head, at a moment when he seemed to himself and to others to be at the very height of his prosperity.

Antonia dared not make fresh supplications to Cæsar on behalf of her *protégé*; all she could do was to give secret orders that he should have every privilege that could alleviate captivity. The centurion who had him in charge was bribed to treat him with indulgence and consideration.

For months Agrippa remained in suspense as to his fate, not knowing but that any hour might bring the order for his execution. The emperor lay ill at Capreæ. One day, as Agrippa was going to the bath (a favor which the good management of Antonia had obtained for him), his freedman Marsyas came up to him in haste, and whispered to him in Hebrew, "The lion is dead!" Agrippa could not conceal his delight. The words meant to him that Tiberius was dead, that his own life was safe, and opened a prospect of deliverance from captivity.

The centurion, who perceived that good news had reached his prisoner, was not long in finding it out. Feeling sure that Agrippa would soon be restored to rank and influence,

and willing to propitiate his favor, he struck off his chains, and invited him to supper. Whilst at that repast, news arrived that Tiberius (like Ferdinand VII. of Spain) after having been pronounced dead by his physicians, had revived, and had asked for food. The jailer, in great terror, rechained his prisoner, insultingly reproaching him for having deceived him by a false report. "Agrippa was in an evil plight that night," says Josephus, when relating the story; but the next day came news that Tiberius was really dead, his faint spark of life having been stifled, some said, by his attendants, who dreaded his recovery.

His successor was his grand-nephew Caius — not the boy Tiberius, his grandson, who he wished should have succeeded him. He had prayed to the gods to grant him a sign as to whether his great-nephew or his grandson should be emperor, but at the same time he manœuvred to have the sign sanction his choice of young Tiberius. It turned out otherwise, and then, having acknowledged Caius to be his heir, he charged him solemnly to be a faithful guardian to the young Tiberius, assuring him that so certainly as he betrayed that trust a great evil would befall him.

As soon as it was considered safe to release a state prisoner bound by order of Tiberius, Caius Cæsar (whom we know best as Caligula) set his friend free, restored to him his royal robes, put a kingly crown upon his head, and made him king over the country beyond the Jordan, of which his uncle Philip, recently deceased, had been only tetrarch. He also caused a chain of gold to be made for him, of weight equal to that of the iron chain he had worn during his captivity. This chain Agrippa subsequently gave to the Temple at Jerusalem.

After two years' residence in Rome, during which time the new emperor showed himself to be a very worthy prince, Agrippa desired leave to revisit his native country. On his way he landed at Alexandria. Flaccus, who had once been Governor of Syria, and had expelled the young prince from his court, under a charge of taking bribes to

use his influence with the government on a certain occasion, was now Governor of Egypt; and an extremely bitter feeling in Alexandria existed between Gentiles and Jews. Agrippa endeavored to avoid ostentatious display, and landed secretly by night. Jews in Alexandria comprised at that time half the population, and from various causes, among which, as in modern times, was envy of their prosperity and wealth, they were cordially feared and detested by the other inhabitants of the city. When the Gentiles in Alexandria, Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians, saw a Jew in their streets wearing a crown, clad in purple, and attended by a guard of honor in glittering armor, the rabble heaped on him the deadliest insults; besides, when last in Alexandria, he had been a fugitive from justice, an embarrassed debtor, who for lack of credit could raise no supplies. He was so ill received on all sides, both by the people and their governor, that he was glad to make his stay as short as possible, and to proceed to his new kingdom on the left bank of the Jordan.

Herodias, when she found her impecunious brother honored with a diadem, bearing the title of king, and high in imperial favor, was extremely indignant. She never ceased to importune and worry the indolent and unambitious Herod Antipas until he consented to go with her to Rome and implore Cæsar to bestow upon him equal honors. He was, she said, the son of a king who had been high in favor with Augustus Cæsar, while Agrippa's father was executed by that same Herod, as a criminal. Already the result of this visit of Herodias and her husband to Rome has been related in the chapter on Herod Antipas. It ended in the dethronement and banishment of Herod Antipas, and the annexation of his government, the late tetrarchy, to Agrippa's kingdom.

Agrippa probably did not remain long in his dominions; residence in Rome was more attractive, and indeed his presence was sadly needed there. The insanity of his friend the emperor was becoming generally known. His mania was shown especially in his desire to be wor-

shipped by his subjects as a god. As preliminary to a general order to place his statues in all places of worship throughout the empire, he ordered Flaccus to begin by setting his effigy up in the midst of the proseuchæ, the open-air places of prayer and religious exercises frequented in Alexandria by the Jews. The Jews resisted; the trees in these places of pious resort were cut down; all was laid waste. Statues of the emperor were placed where "prayer had been wont to be made." A site was chosen by the enemies of the Jews for a statue of the emperor in his chariot, and as there was no time to carry out the design in bronze or marble, an old chariot, once owned by Cleopatra, was pressed into the service.

Fierce tumults and bloody massacres took place in Alexandria. Flaccus was blamed for allowing such disorders in his government. He was dismissed and sent into exile. Possibly representations made to the emperor by Agrippa may have had something to do with his deposition.

Both parties then sent delegations to Rome to plead their cause before the Cæsar. The leading men on both sides are well known to us in literature and history. On the Jewish side was Philo, the author of many books on Jewish life, among which is a relation of what occurred during this embassy. On the Greek side was Apion, a man very unfriendly to the Jews, who afterwards wrote a treatise against them, denying their claims to antiquity as a nation, and collecting all the calumnies current against them in Alexandria. To this, Josephus replied in his tract "Against Apion."

Philo belonged to a very wealthy Jewish family in Alexandria. He was the brother of Tiberius Alexander, who apostatized, rose high in the favor of subsequent Roman emperors, and was with Titus at the siege of Jerusalem.

Philo was nominally a Jew. He adhered to certain Jewish observances, but his religious opinions, so far as they went, were rather those of a Greek philosopher. In his account of his embassy to Caligula he tells us that it

was long before the emperor would receive the disputants from Alexandria, but at length he appointed them to meet him, not in presence of the Senate, nor in state, but in the neighbourhood of Rome at one of his country places.[1] There they were received with a sarcastic smile and a bitter speech. "You are, then," said he, showing his teeth as he spoke, "those enemies of the gods who alone refuse to acknowledge my divinity?" And he followed this up by what his Jewish hearers considered blasphemy against Jehovah. One of their accusers then spoke, saying that the Jews were the only nation who had refused to sacrifice for the emperor. This charge the Jews at once disclaimed, asserting that they had been foremost to offer sacrifices for the emperor on his accession. "Be it so," replied Caligula; "ye have sacrificed *for* me, but not *to* me." He then broke off the interview, and began to run madly through the villa, upstairs and downstairs, the bewildered deputations following him. Suddenly he exclaimed to the Jews, "Why is it that you do not eat pork?" The heathen courtiers burst into a roar of laughter. The Jews replied that different nations had their different customs; some persons would not eat lamb. "They are right," said the emperor, "lamb is a very tasteless meat." Then, after some further antics, and a prolonged trial of their patience, he asked them abruptly on what grounds they claimed citizenship in Alexandria. They began to explain, but Caligula again broke from them, running up and down in the great hall, giving orders to his servants, but paying no attention to the delegates, until he was just about to go away, when he asked more courteously if they had anything further to say to him. Again they resumed their pleading, and again he broke away from them, remarking, however, as they were dismissed, "Well! they do not seem so bad, after all; they are only a poor foolish people who cannot believe that I am their god."

[1] The account of this interview is taken by Milman from the narrative by Philo, and is here, not quite literally, reproduced from his "History of the Jews."

But the mania for having his statues set up in holy places, and being worshipped by all his subjects as a deity, was strong upon him. To the heathen the admission of an additional god into their pantheon was a matter of indifference, but it was quite otherwise with the Jews. The Jews have never had a strong feeling of nationality. The devotion to fatherland, which we call patriotism, was supplied with them by devotion to the Law and to the Temple, where the Law may be said to have had its capital. To profane the Temple, to subvert the Law, stirred every Jew into vehement opposition. It might be sweet for a Roman to die for his country, but sweeter far was it for a Jew to die for God's Temple, and the great gift given to the Jewish people from Jehovah, — the Ceremonial Law.

Caligula issued orders that the heads of famous statues of divinities in Greece — Jupiter, Hercules, and others, — should be cut off, and replaced by his own. And as it was well understood in Rome that the decree commanding all peoples, nations, and languages throughout the empire to pay divine honor to the emperor would be stoutly resisted only in Judea, Caligula determined to use his best efforts to enforce obedience there.

Augustus had *allowed* temples and statues to be erected by flatterers in his honor, and had passively consented to receive their worship; Tiberius had emphatically declined such homage; but Caligula in his frenzy determined to enforce such service to himself.

For this purpose, under the advice of his chief counsellors (a slave and a buffoon), the fatal mandate was put forth. A gilded colossal statue of Caligula was to be placed in the Temple at Jerusalem, in the innermost sanctuary, and the Temple was to be dedicated to Jupiter of Olympus, and to the emperor, as the younger Jupiter.

The Roman of high rank selected to carry out this edict was Publius Petronius.

We know Petronius in the vivid pages of "Quo Vadis," and no portrait more faithful to contemporary history was ever drawn. To meet him in history seems like the sur-

prise of unexpectedly encountering in the street an old and valued friend.

Renan, while speaking in his "Antichrist" of the universal corruption of society in Rome, says: "The 'honest man' in this age of transcendent iniquity—yet the one who represents and sums up the quality of the time—is Petronius. He gave the day to sleep, the night to business and amusement. He was not one of those fast-livers who ruin themselves in vulgar debauchery, but a voluptuary thoroughly versed in the science of pleasure. The natural ease and free play of his speech and acts gave him a most winning air of frankness. While proconsul in Bithynia, and afterwards as consul, he showed the finest talent for administration. When he returned to vice,—or the affected display of it,—he found his way to the innermost circle of Nero's court, and came to be the sovereign judge of taste,—*arbiter elegantiarum*; nothing was delightful or in good form without his verdict."

Petronius obeyed the mandate which sent him, as it were, on a forlorn hope of overcoming the resistance of the Jews. His orders were to place the statue of Caligula in the Temple at Jerusalem at all costs and hazards, and he was empowered, if necessary, to summon two legions from the shores of the Euphrates, to carry out the will of the emperor, from which there was no possible appeal.

Appalled by the difficulties that he saw before him, Petronius summoned a council of his friends to assist him by their advice; they all agreed that the mandate of the emperor was imperative. Then Petronius gave orders to Sidonian workmen to make the gilded statue. He sailed for Judea, and took up his winter quarters with his soldiers at Ptolemais (Acre). It was the winter of the year A. D. 41. As soon as the people of Judea knew of the orders with which he came from Rome, high and low, priests and people, assembled to protest and to implore. They covered the country; many of them wearing sackcloth, and with ashes on their heads. In vain Petronius endeavored to impress them with the absolute necessity of yielding

obedience to a mandate of the emperor, and assured them that his master's commands were as imperative on himself as on them. They answered that their obedience was first due to the ordinances of God. If he must obey Caligula, they must obey Jehovah, or die rather than take part in the violation of His sanctuary.

Petronius, moved by their distress, left his legions and his statues at Ptolemais, and went into Galilee, where, at Tiberias, he summoned the chief men of the Jews to meet him. In vain he urged on them the necessity of yielding obedience to the emperor, — the hopelessness of resistance to his will. And, when his arguments had no effect, he asked them if they were resolved to wage war against the whole power of Rome. "We have no thought of war," they replied unanimously, "but we will submit to be massacred rather than violate our Law." And then, remembering perhaps a similar scene enacted a few years before in the presence of Pontius Pilate, they fell on the ground upon their faces, and bared their necks to the sword.

Petronius was much moved. The struggle lasted forty days. Meantime the crops remained unsown, the land uncultivated. Leading men among the Jews, one of whom was Aristobulus the brother of Agrippa, remonstrated with Petronius on the folly of reducing a flourishing province to a desert land. All this, coinciding with the feelings and opinions of Petronius himself, induced him at last to promise that he would forward a remonstrance on their part to Caligula; but he plainly told them that by so doing he was hazarding his own life, with little probability that their lives would be spared.

He did not send the remonstrance; he wrote letters excusing his delays to the emperor on the ground that the gilded statue was not yet out of the workmen's hands.

When these letters reached Caligula his fury knew no bounds, and while his rage was at its height his early friend Agrippa entered his presence. Caligula turned upon him, and broke into such vehement reproaches, and threats of vengeance against the Jews, that Agrippa, taken by surprise,

lost his self-command, and fainted in his sovereign's presence. When he recovered he said no more on the subject of the Jews, but invited the emperor to a banquet, — more magnificent than anything that, up to that time, had been seen even in luxurious Rome. Delighted with the honor paid him by such a feast, the emperor, while at table, begged Agrippa to say what favour he should grant him. "Agrippa, with," says Philo, "the feeling of one who had the blood of the Asmonean princes in his veins (and perhaps the example of Queen Esther in his heart), asked nothing for himself, but earnestly implored the repeal of the mandate which involved the destruction of his people."

It cost Caligula a hard struggle to grant this boon to his former friend and favorite, but at length he did so, protesting at the same time that this concession should not stay his wrath against Petronius, to whom he wrote letters charging him with having preferred the bribes of the Jews to obedience to his sovereign, and commanding him to return at once to Rome, there to receive exemplary punishment.

Happily, the ship that bore these letters encountered a great storm, which delayed it on its passage; and when it reached a port in Palestine, another vessel, which had made a good voyage, had arrived before it, bringing news to Petronius of the dethronement and death of his insane master.

The mad acts of Caligula and his unreasoning cruelties, had alarmed the very ministers of his murderous caprices. They resolved to kill him as he quitted the amphitheatre at the close of certain games in honor of Augustus. He was overtaken, stabbed, and hacked to pieces, in a dark passage. Rome was taken by surprise; no plans for what was to follow the assassination of the mad emperor had been made. A party in the Senate desired the re-establishment of the old Roman republic; the army clamored for a military chief. For a few hours there was danger of civil war in Rome, when Agrippa came forward. "And," says Dean Milman, in his "History of the Jews,"

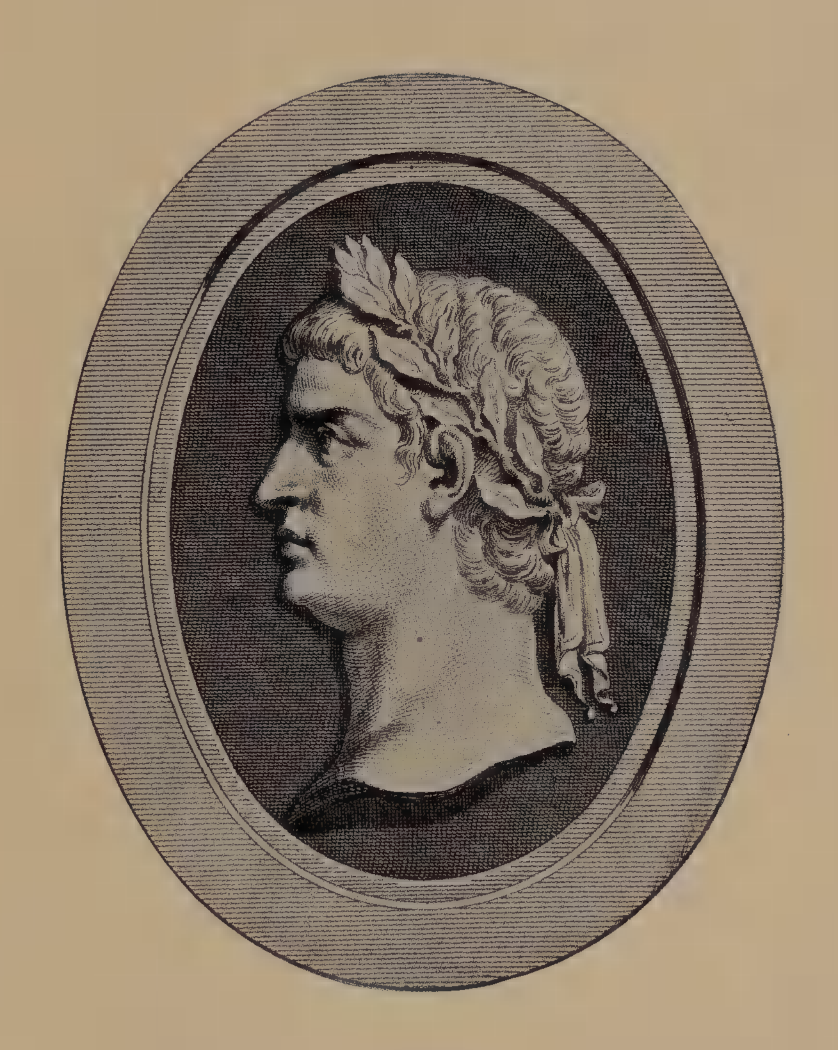
"at that critical period, and in the confusion that followed, he sustained an important part. His conduct was honorable to his feelings as well as to his address and influence. He alone paid the last honors to his murdered friend. He then became mainly instrumental in the peaceful re-establishment of that order of things which, however different from that which an ardent lover of the old Roman liberty might have desired, was perhaps the best which the circumstances of the case would admit. He persuaded the Senate to abandon their unavailing resistance to the infuriated soldiery; while he reassured the weak and unambitious spirit of Claudius (son of the elder Drusus, uncle of Caligula and next heir to the throne). At the same time he dissuaded him from taking those violent measures against the Senate to which the soldiers were urging him, and which would have deluged Rome in blood."

Claudius had lived a studious life in Rome as a quiet, peaceful citizen, and when tumult on the death of Caligula broke out in the palace, he hastened to hide himself. One of the German body-guard, however, rushing through the palace, saw, it is said, his feet protruding from beneath a curtain.[1] With loud laughter he pulled forth the half-dazed fugitive, and shouted to his comrades that he had found them an emperor!

As soon as Agrippa heard of this, he quitted the dead body of his murdered friend, and came forward to give Claudius good counsel. By his advice the Senate offered the diadem to the soldiers' candidate, and, also by his advice, Claudius promised the Roman people a mild and equitable government.

Having seen the new emperor firmly established and the murderers of his predecessor punished, Agrippa did not remain in Rome to be his sovereign's personal friend and counsellor. He went back to his own country, where Claudius added to his dominions Judea, Samaria, and Abilene; so that his rule was as extensive as had been that of

[1] A picture of this scene by Alma-Tadema is in the Walters Gallery in Baltimore.



CLAUDIUS.

his grandfather King Herod the Great. To please Agrippa, the man whom the king delighted to honor, Herod, his younger brother, was made King of Chalcis, and a decree was passed favoring the Jews. The edict which announced the donation of new dominions to Agrippa was set forth with great publicity; the act contained a warm eulogium upon Agrippa, and it was registered in the Capitol on a tablet of brass.

When Agrippa reached his new dominions his policy was to make friends with those he was appointed to rule. The Pharisees were the popular party. Agrippa endeavored to ingratiate himself with them by observing minutely all that was required of a zealous Jew. He offered sacrifices daily in the Temple, he paid the expenses of many Nazarites, he relaxed the burden of the taxes; and "the Mishna records, with admiration," says Dean Farrar, "that he paid his offering of first-fruits with his own hand, like any other Israelite, taking his basket on his shoulder." I have told already how the chain of gold, as heavy as the chain of iron he had worn in captivity, was hung up by him in the Temple. Thus the Jews, for the first time for many generations, had a popular sovereign.

In endeavoring "to please the Jews" he bethought himself unhappily of persecuting the rising sect of Christians. He killed James, the son of Zebedee, with the sword, and, perceiving that this act increased his popularity, "he proceeded to take Peter also." But Peter was mysteriously delivered from prison, and Agrippa was unable at the coming Passover to gratify the Jews, as he had hoped, by the spectacle of his execution.

About this time he broke off friendly relations with Silas, an old and tried friend and servant, whom he had made Master of his Horse. Agrippa had been always sensitive, as we have seen, about his early misfortunes; he had endured disgrace, to which he could not bear allusion, and Silas took advantage of old familiarity to remind him frequently of his former poverty. Agrippa at

last grew angry, and sent the old friend who had presumed too far to prison. But he repented before long. In the kindness of his heart he wanted to be friends again with his old servant, and sent Silas an invitation to dinner. But Silas was implacable; he refused to be forgiven. He scorned the king's overture of reconciliation, and Agrippa, to use his own expression, "had to leave him to his folly."

But great as the services of Agrippa had been to Rome and to the Roman emperor, he was, during his short reign over all Palestine, made to feel more than once that he was a vassal after all. A wall that he was building round Jerusalem excited the suspicion of the Legate of Syria, who compelled him to leave the work half done; and subsequently, when he was entertaining four kings with games and feasts at Tiberias, the same legate chose to fancy that such a gathering of potentates portended some conspiracy, and by his own proconsular authority, dismissed Agrippa's guests to their own homes.

We read in the Acts of the Apostles, that Agrippa, in the year 44 A.D., conceived some displeasure against the people of Tyre, who, being afraid that they might be cut off from their food supply (for there was to be "a great dearth throughout the land in the days of Claudius Cæsar"), humbly waited on him at Cæsarea, where he was holding games and offering vows for the prosperity of the emperor. On the second day of these spectacles, Agrippa, wearing his diadem, and clad in a robe of silver tissue, which dazzled the eyes of the spectators as it caught the early rays of the summer sun, entered the theatre, and was received with shouts which hailed him as a god. This adulation delighted him, — he loved popularity. Perhaps he remembered how, twenty years before, in all the towns along that coast he had been despised as a penniless adventurer. The shouts continued. His heart was filled with exultation, when raising his eyes he saw upon a rope over his head a little owl such as he had seen once before when standing bound before the door of a Roman prison. "The fatal omen," says Josephus, "pierced the heart of the

king," and with deep melancholy he said to those about him, "Your god will soon suffer the common lot of humanity." A few moments after, he was seized with violent intestinal pains, — probably the same disease as that of King Herod, his grandfather. Scripture thus describes it: "Because he gave not God the glory he was eaten of worms and gave up the ghost." For five days he lingered in great agony, and then died in the forty-fourth year of his age.

Claudius considered Agrippa, his seventeen-year-old son, too young to be placed at the head of so turbulent a dependency of the Roman Empire as the Jewish kingdom; but he promised to give it to him when he should be old enough to govern it. Meantime Judea was to relapse into a Roman province, and Cuspius Fadus was sent to it as its procurator.

Herod Agrippa left four children: his son, the second Agrippa; Berenice, who was probably the most fascinating woman of her time (she had been early married to her uncle Herod of Chalcis); Drusilla, whom her father had united to Aziz, King of Emesa; and Mariamne, who later married a wealthy Jew in Egypt, the nephew of Philo.

If Agrippa was popular among the Jews, he was far from standing well with the Syrians and Greeks in his dominions. The Roman legions under his command, whose license he had restrained in their intercourse with the Jews, made indecent rejoicings over his death; insulting his memory and his family. Claudius was indignant when he heard of this, and ordered the removal of the offending legion to Pontus. For some reason unknown to us, this sentence was not put in execution, and the Roman soldiers treasured up the memory of their disgrace that they might visit it when opportunity should offer on the Jews. Twenty, and twenty-five years later, the time for vengeance came. The memory of a warlike band, — a regiment or a legion, is a long one. The rancor excited in the hearts of these legionaries towards the Jews by this event was, thinks Josephus, one of the prime causes of his country's subsequent disasters.

CHAPTER XX.

FELIX, FESTUS, FLORUS.

HEROD AGRIPPA died in the year 44 A. D. The Procurator Cuspius Fadus, who succeeded to his authority in Judea, when on his death his dominions became again dependencies of the imperial province of Syria, was a man of Roman sternness. Agrippa had been a conciliatory ruler, but was never an able one. His laxity gave encouragement to bands of outlaws, who desolated the country lying east of the Jordan. Fadus made them feel the power of the Roman arm, but on attempting to revoke the decree by which Vitellius had intrusted to the Jews the custody of their high-priests' robes of office, he was met by the opposition of all parties in Jerusalem, and also by the influence of the young Agrippa in Rome. This prince stood high in the favor of Claudius, and obtained for his uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, the guardianship of the Temple, the privilege of nominating the high-priests, and the custody of the sacerdotal robes.

Since Joseph Caiaphas was deposed (A. D. 36) there had been five high-priests. Herod of Chalcis removed the one who held office when he was made custodian of the Temple, and appointed Joseph the son of Kamith in his stead.

In those days the Jews in all countries, and likewise the Christians, were in a ferment of expectation. They were looking for the advent of that great Deliverer who should establish his kingdom upon earth, and give pre-eminence to his chosen people. Their confidence, founded upon prophecy, had communicated itself vaguely to the heathen world.

"The Jews who rejected Christ were not fiends, but men, some of them very bad men, but yet men; and not so infernally and purely wicked as many have seemed to think them. There were some things which might have given doubt as to Christ in the best-disposed minds. There was abundance of prophecy no doubt, but much of it was obscure, and some of it seemed to favor the opponents' views; for instance, the prophecies which represented the grandeur and power of the Messiah. It does not appear at all unnatural that many found it hard to think that such prophecies could be fulfilled in the person of a meek man, poor and without a home. The very nature of the Mosaic dispensation had a tendency to keep the mind somewhat fixed on the external, and on form and dignity, so that minds trained in it had a difficulty that we can hardly conceive in appreciating anything so purely spiritual as the kingdom of Christ. . . . The Jews, believing most deeply that the old system was from God, — *and all of it*, — very naturally thought that no part or degree of it could be abrogated without blasphemy, and with every part of that system the Jew associated his highest affections, his pride, and his hope."[1]

All this may well be remembered as we enter on this period of Jewish history, when fanaticism ran rampant, and the woes of the present seemed but the prelude to the approaching glories of Messiah's reign.

There were a million Jews in Egypt; and in the East their numbers were far greater. The return of devout Jews to Palestine after the seventy years' captivity was small in proportion to those left in Babylonia, Persia, Parthia, Armenia, and the neighboring countries. While the Jews in Alexandria had been Grecianized, the Jews of Babylonia kept strictly to the Law of Moses. Proselytes were made in the East even in high places. Kings, queens, and

[1] From an unpublished sermon by the Rev. Dr. Alexander G. Mercer, of Newport, R. I. Three volumes of his sermons have been posthumously published: "Bible Characters;" "The Teaching of Christ;" and "He, being Dead, yet Speaketh."

princes became Jews. Some were converted by travelling traders, who did the work of missionaries when admitted to the women's apartments to display their wares. Nearly all the women of rank and consequence in Damascus were proselytes, or in secret favored the Jews. Among those who were thus converted was Helena, Queen of Adiabene, a land lying on the shores of the Tigris. She and her sons became devoted converts to Judaism. They built a palace in Jerusalem in which they might reside when attending the yearly Feasts; and during the great famine in the days of Claudius they expended vast sums in bringing wheat from Alexandria, and figs from Cyprus, to feed the famished people. The younger members of the family were sent to Jerusalem, to be there instructed by the Doctors of the Law, and, when Helena died, her remains, and those of her son Izartes, were transported to Judea, and interred in a splendid mausoleum near Jerusalem.

Another event mentioned in the New Testament which took place during the administration of Fadus, was an insurrection led by one Theudas, an impostor, who "boasted himself to be somebody." He gathered a great number of adherents on the left bank of the Jordan, and assured them that, like Joshua, he would divide the waters of the river, and that they should pass over it dry-shod. But Roman vigilance seized on him before he had time to make the attempt; his head was cut off, and sent to Jerusalem.

I have told already of wholesale massacres of Jews in Egypt and in Syria, during the latter days of Caligula's reign. The Jews in Babylonia about the same time suffered terribly in the same way, chiefly through the persistent enmity of the Syrians.

Two brothers, Jewish outlaws, put themselves at the head of a band hidden in a swamp, like the followers of Hereward the Wake in his Camp of Refuge. Their aims, like those of the Saxon leader, were partly political. They acquired such fame by their prowess that they and their followers were enlisted as free lances in the service of a king of Parthia who held them in great esteem. But prosperity

led to a dispute between the brothers, to their ultimate downfall, and to dreadful reprisals against all the Jewish families in Babylonia.

Fadus governed Palestine only two years, and was succeeded by Tiberius Alexander, an apostate Jew, son of the Alabarch (or municipal ruler of the Jews in Alexandria) who had received Herod Agrippa with some kindness in his days of adversity. Tiberius Alexander was also the nephew of Philo, the pamphleteer and historian.

Tiberius Alexander governed Judea only two years. The principal event which distinguishes his administration was the crucifixion of two Zealot leaders, James and Simon, sons of Judas the Galilean, a brigand and a rebel, according to Roman ideas, while thousands of his countrymen considered him a patriot after the pattern of the Maccabean brothers.

In A. D. 48 Ventidius Cumanus succeeded Tiberius Alexander. There was at that time a new high-priest, the second who had been appointed by Herod, King of Chalcis, since he became governor of the Temple.

The death of Herod gave Claudius the opportunity of appointing Agrippa II. to the sovereignty of the Temple and to the kingdom of Chalcis, to which was added a large part of Galilee, and districts lying beyond the Jordan. At once young King Agrippa assumed authority. Herod of Chalcis had left two sons, one of whom Nero made a king in Lesser Armenia, but the affairs of that branch of the Herodian family play little part in history.

The Roman legion quartered in Jerusalem was the same that so indecently at Cæsarea had rejoiced over the death of the Jewish king, Herod Agrippa. The anger of Claudius had been kindled against them for their conduct, and he had decreed their severe punishment; but the order was not carried into effect. It was not, however, as I have said, forgotten by the legion. They took every opportunity to show their scorn and detestation of the Jews. On some public occasion when a party of them was stationed in one of the colonnades of the Temple to keep

order during a festival, one of the soldiers committed a vulgar act of indecency which shocked the feelings of the Jewish worshippers. A tumult arose in which some thousands of people perished; the sacrifices were suspended, and the whole city was filled with wrath and wailing.

Audacious robberies were about this time committed by roving bands of banditti (or insurgent patriots) in the vicinity of Jerusalem. A soldier — one of a party sent into southern Judea to burn some villages where the robbers were believed to conceal themselves — found a copy of the Law, and publicly with oaths and blasphemy tore it in pieces. For this outrage his superiors had him executed; but the wrath of the populace was not appeased.

The half-smothered animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans broke out afresh. Ventidius Cumanus, then Procurator of Judea, took part with the Samaritans. The Jews carried their complaints to the Governor of Syria, who, having investigated the affair, put leading men of both parties to death, by way of showing even-handed justice. He sent also the high-priest Ananias to Rome in chains, and ordered Cumanus to appear before the emperor to answer for himself. The influence of the young Agrippa, assisted by that of the Empress Agrippina, procured the release of the high-priest, and the punishment of the procurator. A new high-priest (or rather a *sagan*, or *locum tenens*), named Jonathan, having, thanks to Agrippa, acquired some influence at court, exerted himself to obtain the procuratorship of Judea for Claudius Felix,[1] brother of the worthless Pallas, the freedman and favorite of Claudius Cæsar.

Felix was born a slave, had the vices and the spirit of a slave, and was notorious, even in those evil days, for his profligacy. Obscure as was his birth, he married three wives in succession, all of them ladies of royal descent. The woman who was his wife while he governed Judea was Drusilla, daughter of King Herod Agrippa. Her father had married her to Aziz, King of Emesa, who had

[1] It is doubtful if his name was Claudius or Antonius.

consented to accept the sign of Jewish faith that he might obtain her in marriage. But Drusilla abandoned him, seduced by Felix. Her marriage to a heathen was more abominable than her adultery in the eyes of the Jews. We know how shamelessly she sat with her husband on the judgment-seat, to hear the pleading of Saint Paul; we know how the sycophantic orator Tertullus began his speech with an address to Felix: "Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, we accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness;" and we know, too, that the apostle commenced his address by merely saying: "Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been for many years a judge unto this nation,[1] I do the more cheerfully answer for myself."

Tacitus tells us that, supported by the influence of his brother Pallas, Felix governed his province "with the authority of a king, but the disposition of a slave," committing all sorts of crimes and cruelties with impunity. On the murder of Claudius by his wife Agrippina, Felix was succeeded by a better man, Porcius Festus. When this new procurator was hearing the cause of Saint Paul, Agrippa and his sister Berenice sat with him on the judgment seat. While Felix was in office they had avoided intercourse with him as the new husband of their adulterous sister Drusilla. Much has been said against the character of Berenice, both by Suetonius and Juvenal, but scandals must have been common in Roman society in those days, and evil reports must have followed the steps of every high-born woman. Berenice was early married to her uncle Herod of Chalcis, afterwards to Ptolemeo, King of Pontus, from whom she subsequently separated, and she resided ever after in the house of her brother Agrippa. She was his eldest sister, and at the time when the young Titus became her devoted admirer she was forty-two years of age, which seems to make it improbable that the attraction she had for him was of a vulgar kind. It was more likely that

[1] Felix was Procurator of Judea eight years — from A. D. 52 to 60.

which a highly accomplished and intellectual woman might exercise over a young man of ambition and promise, who had had few opportunies of intercourse with the fashionable world. All we know of Berenice is in her favor. She always exerted an influence for mercy and for honorable conduct, both over her brother and Titus, his friend and patron. She was a conscientious observer of the rules of the Jewish Law, and never shrank from acknowledging her country or her religion.

Drusilla and her son by Felix, who was named Agrippa, perished in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which in A. D. 79 destroyed Pompeii.

Festus, when he became Governor of Judea, found himself at the head of a distracted province. Every part of Palestine was in anarchy and confusion. It seems to have been a thing unheard-of in that day for any Roman who had been appointed to the high office of a provincial procurator to refuse to accept so important a position; nevertheless we wonder that men who lived in Rome, in ease and luxury, could have been found willing to undertake so thankless a task as that of governing the Jews. Roman officials who held that office must have been worried nearly out of their lives by complaints and disputes that they could not understand, by appeals to Cæsar against themselves, by the state of the country, and the diversity of factions, both political and theological, between which they were called upon to take some side. To be sure, each procurator counted upon quitting office with a fortune. Every high Roman official "feathered his own nest" — to use a homely simile.

Nero was now Emperor of Rome. He was the son of Agrippina by a former marriage, and in no way descended from his predecessor Claudius. He gave to the Greeks of Cæsarea the control of that city, making them in municipal matters the equals of the Jews. But the Jews protested that Cæsarea was *their* city, built by *their* king, Herod, on Judean soil. The Greeks asserted that it was essentially a Gentile city, adorned with temples and statues abhorrent

to the Jews. The dispute led to perpetual riots, and finally to a massacre.

In addition to such local massacres, and to insurrections against the Romans, there were angry disputes among the Jews themselves, dissensions between the wealthy and the destitute, the pious and the worldly, the aristocrats and the Chasidim, the upper orders of the priests and the Levites, their inferiors, whom they oppressed and defrauded. The office of high-priest and all offices dependent on it were in the hands of the Sadducees. Corruption, bribery, and self-indulgence, had reached an extreme point. The office of supreme pontiff was openly bought by women for their husbands. The rapid succession of high-priests was to the Herods and Roman procurators a source of revenue. Those refined and wealthy "gentlemen," whose duty it was to offer sacrifices at the High Altar in the Temple, shrank from soiling their hands with the blood of the victims, and wore silk gloves while performing sacrificial duties. There was a popular rhyme sung in those days in the streets of Jerusalem: —

> "Plague be on the house of Boëthus, —
> A plague on them by reason of their clubs!
> Plague be on the house of Hanan, —
> A plague on them by reason of their plots!
> Plague be on the house of Catherus, —
> A plague on them by reason of their shames!
> Plague be upon the house of Ishmael the son of Fabi, —
> A plague on them by reason of their fists! —
> These are our high-priests, their sons are our treasurers;
> Their sons-in-law overseers; their slaves beat us with clubs!"

Bloody quarrels daily broke out in the streets of Jerusalem. In vain, during the administration of Felix, the high-priest remonstrated with the procurator; such interference only caused exasperation. Felix employed the Sicarii, who might be described in modern slang as the "roughs" of the zealous party, to insult and assassinate his enemies. The Sicarii were a band of Jewish bravoes who carried short swords under their cloaks. Felix commanded

a party of them to enter the Temple during service, and strike the high-priest dead.

"From that moment," says Josephus, when relating this event, "God hated His guilty city, and disdaining any longer to dwell in His contaminated Temple, brought the Romans to purify with fire the sins of the nation."

After this assassination of the high-priest, the Sadducees and their Sicarii became masters of Jerusalem. No man was safe from sudden assassination. Outlaws and robbers increased throughout the country, and fanatics who believed themselves to be patriots, or rather defenders of the faith, made everywhere resistance to the Romans.

The Emperor Claudius, shortly before his death, had put the young Agrippa in possession of all his father's dominions, in addition to the kingdom of Chalcis and the guardianship of the Temple.

Ananias, the high-priest, who had been sent in chains to Rome at the close of the administration of Cumanus, was detained there for some years, and his office was meantime filled by a *sagan*, the afterwards murdered Jonathan. After this murder Ananias for a time resumed his office, and he was the personage in whom Saint Paul failed to recognize the high-priest, when he was brought before the Sanhedrim.

The forty men who under oath bound themselves to slay Paul, were probably Sicarii, hired for this purpose by the priests, who frequently availed themselves of the services of such ruffians; for a bitter schism, as I have said, had broken out between the superior and inferior orders of the priesthood.

Agrippa, during the sixteen years in which he exercised the power of appointment, made seven high-priests.

It was in these days, when Hanan (Ananias) was in office (he was son of the Annas who shares the guilt of our Lord's crucifixion), and during an absence of Agrippa from Jerusalem, that Saint James the Less, brother (or cousin) of our Lord, and head of the Christian Church in Jerusalem, was brought before the Sanhedrim, together with

some other leading Christians, and charged with blasphemy. They were condemned to death, and stoned immediately.

"The authority of Agrippa was needful to the assembling of the Sanhedrim, and that of the procurator was legally necessary to confirm a death sentence, but the furious Hanan set himself above all rules. James was stoned near the Temple, and since there was some difficulty in carrying out the sentence, his head was crushed by a fuller with his beating-club." [1]

James had been looked on as a champion of the poor. He had always conformed to legal rites, and was beloved by the oppressed and needy. Almost the whole population of Jerusalem joined in urging King Agrippa to restrain the power of the high-priest.

Festus had died in office, and his successor Albinus, on his way from Alexandria, was met by complaints of Hanan and an account of his crimes. Agrippa too joined the procurator on his journey and told him the same story. As soon as they reached Jerusalem Hanan was deposed. He had ruled only three months, and was the fifth son (or son-in-law) of Annas who was elevated to the high-priesthood.

All men in those days, Jews, Christians, or heathen, were in a state of ferment. All were fearfully looking for portents which would foretell some great and terrifying event.

"A sort of strange insanity," says M. Renan, "prevailed in those days in Jerusalem. Anarchy was at its height. The Zealots, though decimated by executions, were masters of the situation. Albinus, no way a man like Festus, sought to make profit of these bandits by connivance with them." [1] At this time through the streets by day and night roamed a fanatic, crying incessantly: "A voice from the East! A voice from the West! A voice from the four winds! A voice against Jerusalem and the Temple! A voice against the bridegroom and his bride! A voice against all the people! Woe, woe, to Jerusalem!"

[1] Renan, Antichrist.

The murder of the Apostle Saint James took place A. D. 62, eight years before the destruction of the Temple. No successor was appointed as head of the Christian Church in Jerusalem, but after his death his fellow-Christians, recalling the words of their Lord, and believing that the destruction of Jerusalem was at hand, began to retire from the city, until all were safe from impending catastrophe beyond Jordan in the dominion of Agrippa, in the place once occupied by Alexander's veterans, — the city of Pella.

During the administration of Festus, King Agrippa resided in Jerusalem, his abode being the palace of the Asmoneans on Mount Zion, over against the Temple. There he built himself "a lofty pleasure house," — a tower which on its summit contained a chamber, in which he could recline and enjoy a bird's-eye view of the whole city, but especially he could look down into the Temple courts, and watch all that went on there. The priests were indignant at this intrusion on their privacy, and ran up a high wall, which deprived the king of his view of the Temple. He and Festus gave orders to have this wall taken down. The priests resisted, and appealed to Cæsar. Josephus was one of the delegation sent to plead the cause of the priests before Nero. By the influence of Nero's wife, Poppæa, who, if not a proselyte to Judaism, at least favored the Jews, the wall was permitted to stand, but the high-priest and several Jews of rank who had come up to Rome with the delegation were detained in the capital.

Agrippa had thus the advantage of appointing a new high-priest, Joseph Kabi. In four years he had made five.

Albinus, when he succeeded Festus, found himself much embarrassed by brigands and outlaws. He was unable to restrain the Zealots and Sicarii who infested the city; he therefore made an arrangement with them by which they paid for his protection. He also received bribes from Ananias, who had been high-priest, but was now the leader

of a political party. He bargained with the outlaws that whenever one of them was arrested his comrades were to seize an adherent of Ananias, who would then see that the robber was released, and so effect an exchange of captives.

Agrippa, now foreseeing what must be the fate of Jerusalem, planned for himself a city of refuge at Cæsarea-Philippi. There he built a theatre, and at Berytus (Beyrout) he erected a magnificent amphitheatre to be used for gladiatorial games.

Meantime in Jerusalem, under Albinus, things went from bad to worse. Deposed high-priests, followed by armed adherents, attacked each other in the streets. Albinus, who was held responsible for these disorders, was recalled, but before he left Jerusalem he opened the prison doors (possibly in fulfilment of some bargain with the Sicarii) and let loose a crowd of malefactors. These spread through the country, carrying into the rural districts ruin and dismay.

Added to this, in the year 64 A.D. work upon Herod's Temple was completed. Eighteen thousand workmen were thrown out of employment. Then the older, wiser men left in Jerusalem besought King Agrippa to find work for them by adding to the magnificence of the Eastern Gate, and appropriating for that purpose funds from the Temple treasury. But Agrippa refused to touch the money in the Temple. To do this, he feared, might raise such a revolt in Jerusalem as had attended the attempt of Pontius Pilate to build an aqueduct. But he ordered that the streets of the city should be paved with stones, which employed some part of the men thrown out of work by the completion of the Temple.

The problems that perplex us in modern times seem to have been embarrassing to rulers in the days of the Herods.

To Albinus succeeded Gessius Florus (A.D. 64), who was, by all accounts, the worst Roman procurator ever appointed to govern Judea. He obtained the office through the influence of his wife Cleopatra over the Empress Poppæa. Strong in court favor he did what he would in his unfor-

tunate province, acting independently of his superior, Cestius Gallus, the Legate of Syria, whenever it suited his purpose or his pleasure to do so.

Cruel and rapacious, he united the evil qualities of Felix and Albinus; and, as Cestius Gallus did nothing to oppose him, there seemed no way of checking his excesses. The Jews, as it were, were given over to his will.

On one occasion when Cestius visited Jerusalem, the leading men of that city appeared before him, and laid charges against Florus. Florus stood beside the proconsul, and listened to the complaints heaped up against him, laughing as, one by one, his iniquities were enumerated, and his villanies exposed. At length the farce was ended, when Cestius Gallus said gravely that he would admonish the procurator to be more just and lenient in future.

Excitement in Jerusalem rose to a great height when at this time a comet appeared in the sky, and other marvellous lights illuminated the heavens.

Florus, secure of impunity, accepted large bribes from some of the Jews to afford them justice, and then contemptuously refused to do what he had been paid for. Josephus, who lays the blame of all that afterwards took place chiefly on Florus, "thinks," says Dean Milman, "that it was the procurator's deliberate purpose to drive the people into insurrection, both that all enquiry into his oppressions might be drowned by the din of war, and that he might have better opportunities for plunder." Especially did he desire such a tumult as would authorize him to sack the treasury of the Temple. To this end he advanced with a large force on Jerusalem from Cæsarea, which he left in a state of insurrection. To his surprise and disappointment, the population of Jerusalem offered him no pretext for massacre or plunder. He was received as if he had been a public benefactor. But when he had taken up his residence in the palace of the Herods he summoned the high-priest, and members of the Sanhedrim before his judgment seat, and required that all who had ventured to insult him in certain street tumults, which had followed his demand

for seventeen talents, should be delivered over to his vengeance.

As the authorities declared they would be unable to detect those guilty of insulting cries, Florus let loose his soldiers on the city, and three thousand six hundred Jews, men, women, and children, including many who were Roman citizens, were indiscriminately massacred. Agrippa was not at that time in Jerusalem, but Berenice was there, and exerted herself most bravely on behalf of her countrymen. She sent repeated messages to Florus imploring him to restrain the violence of his soldiers, and at last with her hair dishevelled, and her feet bare, she appeared as a suppliant before his tribunal. But Florus, bent on plundering rich Jews and their still richer Temple, was deaf to the pleadings of Berenice. In her very presence Jews for whom she implored mercy were scourged and murdered. Utterly discouraged, the Asmonean princess was forced to return to her own palace, where all night she apprehended an attack from the soldiers of Florus, which could scarcely have been resisted by her scanty body-guard.

In vain the leading Sadducees and officials of the Temple implored the populace to restrain their indignation, and not to further exasperate the Roman procurator. The people listened, partly from respect, and partly from despair. But Florus was far from being pleased with their submission. He had expected that their excitement would give him fresh grounds for sack and plunder. He demanded as a proof of their complete submission that the population of Jerusalem should go forth to receive two Roman cohorts then on their march from Cæsarea, and welcome them into the city.

This seemed too much to ask from zealous Jews made furious by the murder of their relatives and friends, but the priests assembled the people in the court of the Temple, and falling down before them, with their sacred vestments rent, implored them not to bring certain ruin on the city by defying the governor.

They yielded, and the priests led forth the procession of

welcome. But the cohorts, already instructed by Florus, paid no attention to the Jews or to their greeting. This conduct led some to curse the soldiers for their impertinent indifference, and, enraged by this affront, the Romans set upon the multitude with blows. Horsemen trampled down the fallen, and numbers of men in the procession were slain.

By the time the cohorts reached the city the whole population was afoot and in arms, and to prevent the plunder of the Temple treasury all communication was cut off between the sacred precincts and the Castle of Antonia. This brought Florus to terms. He sent for the chief men of Jerusalem, and offered to withdraw his soldiers from the city, leaving only one cohort to preserve peace. These terms having been arranged, Florus retired in safety to Cæsarea. But both the priests and chief men among the Jews (the latter supported by the influence of Berenice) sent delegations to Cestius Gallus, the result of which was that he determined to repair himself to Jerusalem to investigate the causes of the revolt, to restore Roman authority, and punish the guilty.

Agrippa, then on his way from Egypt, was met when he arrived at Jamnia by an agent sent to Jerusalem by Cestius Gallus to make a report on the state of affairs, and also by a deputation of the Jews. He was at first unwilling to commit himself by expressing any opinions, but on his journey, when within seven or eight miles from Jerusalem, he was received by a weeping procession of the wives and mothers of the slain, who recounted all the wrongs that they had suffered from the cruelty and rapacity of the procurator. On his entrance into the city, he and the agent of Cestius Gallus were shown the ruined market-place which had been the principal scene of the massacre, the plundered shops, and deserted houses. The city appeared to be in perfect peace. The agent, who seems to have been a Jewish proselyte, performed his devotions in the Temple, and then returned to the proconsul, favorably impressed by the demeanor of the Jews.

Agrippa next addressed the populace in an eloquent and persuasive speech, fully reported by Josephus, who probably heard it. He said that he did not advise them to send an embassy to Nero stating their grievances in angry terms, for they might feel sure that through his influence at court, a milder government would be accorded them. He exhorted them to lay aside thoughts of independence, reminding them that other nations as brave and determined as they were, but more powerful, had been unable to resist the all-conquering arm of Rome; he instanced the Germans and the Gauls, the Parthians and the Greeks; nay, in his zeal, with little knowledge of the geography of what to him was a far northern region wrapped in darkness, he alluded to recent Roman triumphs in Britain.

"Do you also," he said, "who place your dependence on the strong walls of Jerusalem, consider what a wall the Britons had? For the Romans sailed away to them, and subdued them, though they were encompassed by the ocean, and inhabited an island that is not less than the continent of this habitable world."

Was this unconscious prophecy, — fulfilled in our own nineteenth century, when the imperial sway of that small island extends over far more than the then "habitable world;" when the whole extent of the mighty empire of Nero would be as nothing to the dominions of its Queen? As Agrippa dwelt upon the horrors of war, and the danger of destruction which persistence in revolt would bring upon their city and their holy Temple, he ended in tears, and Berenice, who stood above him on a balcony, wept aloud. His hearers too were melted, and cried out with one voice that they had no intention of making war against the Romans, that their revolt was only against Florus. To prove this, Agrippa urged them to see that arrears of tribute were forthwith collected, and that the way that led from the cloisters of the Temple across the Tyropean ravine to the Castle of Antonia, should be at once repaired. Instantly all set to work with zeal to accomplish these two objects; Agrippa, and even Berenice, not only encouraging the workmen, but assisting them.

Alas! these noble efforts at pacification ended in disappointment. Agrippa stretched his influence too far when he exhorted the people to be content with the government of the detested Florus until such time as Rome should send them another procurator. The very name of Florus roused the multitude to fury. They broke into reproaches, insults, and invectives against Agrippa. They flung stones at him, and menaced his brave sister. In sorrow and wrath, despairing of the future, and no longer seeing any means by which ruin to the nation and the Temple might be averted, Agrippa and Berenice quitted Jerusalem, not to return to it until its doom had been accomplished, its walls thrown down, its Temple burned, and its only inhabitants, a cohort of fierce Romans, put in charge of its ruins.

CHAPTER XXI.

JOSEPHUS.

A NEW person comes upon the stage at the close of this deplorable history, — Flavius Josephus. Flavius was a Roman name adopted in his middle life, out of compliment to the Flavian family, his Roman patrons. He was born in the first year of the reign of Caligula (Caius Cæsar), A. D. 37. His father not only belonged to a priestly family, but was a chief-priest of the first course, from which, before the elevation of the Maccabees, the high-priests were taken. He was also of the royal Asmonean family, — one of his ancestors, his great-great-grandfather, having married the daughter of Jonathan the high-priest, the son of Mattathiah.

The lad Josephus seems to have been early distinguished for intelligence and learning; so much so that, if we may believe his own account, priests and doctors of the Law frequently interrogated him, and listened with respect to his opinions. He also tells us that when still very young he determined to examine for himself the various sects among the Jews, that he might decide with which of them he would ally himself as he grew older. He rejected the Sadducees with little hesitation. He was attracted by the piety and purity of the Essenes, but to share their conventual life would have been little in accordance with his worldly tastes and active disposition. He determined to be a Pharisee, and spent some time in the wilderness with one Barus, an ascetic, and from him received instruction.

When twenty-three he took a leading part in an embassy to Rome, sent thither to plead the cause of certain priests who had been put in bonds by Cæsar. The ship on which he sailed had six hundred men on board, and was wrecked

in the Adriatic. Most of the crew and passengers seem to have perished, but Josephus was one of eighty who were picked up by a passing vessel. Through the influence of the Empress Poppæa, to whose notice he was brought by Alitarius, a Jewish actor, he obtained the release of the captive priests, and received gifts and favors from the empress, of whom he speaks as being a Jewish proselyte; which possibly accounts for her enmity to the Christians.

When Josephus returned to Jerusalem, he found that public feeling in that city was strongly revolutionary, that tumults broke out on every occasion, and that it was highly probable that some rash revolt would be attempted against the Romans. He endeavored so earnestly to persuade all who would hear him that the result of such a step would be their ruin, that he became unpopular, and, fearing personal violence, he took up his residence in the inner court of the Temple (which, as he was of a priestly family, he had a right to do). And there he found himself in company with a number of other priests and leading Pharisees.

These were the days of Gessius Florus, to which we have already brought our narrative. Josephus had hardly taken refuge in the Temple when Agrippa was forced by an excited mob to flee from Jerusalem, and Josephus and the conservatives with whom he acted, alarmed by the excesses of the populace, sent messages to Agrippa and even to Florus, imploring them to come quickly with an armed force to Jerusalem, and put an end to the sedition and anarchy which threatened the destruction of the Temple and the ruin of the Jews.

"Now," as Josephus himself phrases it, "this terrible message was good news to Florus, and because his design was to have a war kindled, he gave the ambassadors no answer at all. But Agrippa was equally solicitous for those that were revolting, and for those against whom the war was to be made, and was desirous to preserve the Jews for the Romans, and the Temple and metropolis for the Jews." He therefore sent three thousand horsemen to



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restore order. But every day there were fresh indications of a spirit of revolt against the Romans. The strong fortress of Masada on the borders of the Dead Sea was captured by insurgents, and its small Roman garrison was put to the sword. Eleazar, governor of the Temple, and captain of its guard, became a revolutionary leader, while his father Ananias, the ex-high-priest, was on the side of the conservatives. Eleazar persuaded the officiating priests, who were under his authority in the Temple, to reject all offerings made by pagans, although the emperors and other high officials had been in the habit of endeavoring to propitiate the Jews (and possibly their Divinity) by costly gifts; in return for which, sacrifices were offered for their welfare and prosperity.

Eleazar and his Zealots were true prototypes of the old Scottish Cameronians, as earnest, as fanatical, as self-devoted, as fierce, and as illogical. In vain conservative and learned men, supposed to possess influence among the people of Jerusalem, assembled the multitude in the great square before the Eastern Gate of the Temple, and earnestly exhorted them to preserve peace and order. They produced not the least effect on the minds of the popular party.

The capture of Masada, and the refusal to offer sacrifices for the emperor, amounted, as these men of wisdom told their hearers, to a declaration of war against their rulers. Eleazar and his fanatics took possession of the inner courts of the Temple, which thus contained two rival factions. On the occasion of a feast, upon which day it was the custom for worshippers to bring fire-wood into the building, a great number of the Sicarii forced their way from the outer courts into the interior, while friends of the other party were refused admission. Then ensued a massacre of the refugees, followed by an attack upon that portion of the city in which were the palaces of Ananias, the ex-pontiff, and Agrippa and Berenice, besides the building in which were stored the public archives, state records, and papers relating to debts of all kinds.

All this reminds us of what happened in Paris in the days of the Commune, when palaces and public buildings were burnt, when the Grand-Livre, the record of the State's debt to capitalists, narrowly escaped destruction, and when the order *Flambez Finances!* was issued by one of the heads of the revolutionary government.

The next day the insurgents, mad with their successes, attacked the Castle of Antonia. It was garrisoned only by a few Roman soldiers. In two days it was taken, and those who had defended it were put to the sword. At this crisis, while a few remaining conservatives, adherents of Agrippa, were defending themselves bravely in a tower which overlooked the Temple, a new leader of the insurgents appeared. This was Manahem, the only surviving grandson of Judas the Galilean, who, years before, had preached that it was impious for a Jew to acknowledge any king but God, or to pay tribute to Cæsar. With sudden conviction, born of excitement and fanaticism, the whole nation now adopted these views, as Manahem with a band of outlaws, for whom he had obtained weapons in the armory of Masada, appeared in their city, and at once obtained there military command. At the head of his followers he was received in Jerusalem by the insurgents as a king. By his command the great tower in which the conservatives had taken refuge was undermined. It tottered and fell, with a tremendous crash; but the besiegers found to their surprise that the chief priests, the Pharisees, the horsemen of Agrippa, and what remained of the Roman cohort, were still capable of making a defence behind an inner wall. Then they endeavored to bring their enemies to terms; and Manahem, willing to avoid further loss, agreed to grant a safe passage to the Jews and to the soldiers of Agrippa. The few Roman soldiers, then left to their fate, retreated into one of the strong towers, built a century before by Herod.

The next day Ananias and his brother Hezekiah, who had been missing ever since the destruction of their palace, were discovered in one of the subterranean passages which

undermine Jerusalem; they were dragged forth, and at once massacred. But the murder of an ex-high-priest was unpopular with the masses; and Eleazar, who had not borne with complacency the usurpation of his authority by Manahem, seized the occasion to wrest power from his rival's hands. Murmurs were heard that Roman oppression had only been exchanged for Jewish tyranny. Manahem's assumption of royal state was resented. The populace declared for Eleazar, and fell upon the outlaws whom Manahem had brought with him into the city. These fled, leaving their commander to his fate, which was a sure and swift one.

Then Eleazar pressed vigorously the siege of the towers still held by the Romans. The soldiers offered to surrender if their lives were spared. They were required to deliver up their arms, and to march out defenceless. The treaty was solemnly ratified. But as soon as the Roman soldiers came forth, and piled their arms, the followers of Eleazar fell upon them. All perished, except Metilius their commander, who cried out that he would become a Jew, and submit to circumcision.

This atrocious act of treachery, committed too upon the Sabbath day, was sure to bring on the devoted city punishment from God, and the vengeance of the Romans. No sounds of triumph were heard in the streets, excitement subsided. The populace was depressed and appalled. That same day, could they have known it, a terrible massacre of Jews took place in Cæsarea, and the whole country, driven to madness by the hopelessness of any reconciliation with the Romans, was soon in open revolt. The hand of the would-be patriots was against every man, and the hand of every man, not of their own party, was against them. Not only a rage for vengeance, but a desire for plunder animated both parties. The mere record of the horrors of this warfare curdles the blood.

The dominions of Agrippa, consisting of the old tetrarchies of his uncle Philip, to which Nero had added several important cities in Galilee, were not without disturbance.

He was at this time at Antioch with Cestius Gallus, the Legate of Syria. That officer was at length roused into collecting his forces. He sent one legion into Galilee, and with others marched on the revolted capital. He formed his camp at Gabaon, about six miles from Jerusalem, but his line of retreat, in the event of a defeat, was through the narrow rocky passes of Bethhoron. The Jews saw the advance of his great army undismayed. They were excited by their universal belief that their own triumph under a Messianic deliverer was near at hand. In these same mountain passes Joshua had overcome the Canaanites, and Judas Maccabæus had defeated the army of Nicanor. Now, although it was the Sabbath, on which day the Jews professed only to engage in defensive warfare, crowds swarmed out of Jerusalem, and fell upon the Romans. Had they been under an experienced leader, their numbers and enthusiasm, in spite of their want of discipline, might have enabled them to gain a complete victory. As it was, after inflicting much loss upon the Romans they retired at night-fall.

Then Agrippa, who was with Cestius and the Roman forces, made a last effort to bring his countrymen to reason. He sent two of his friends to offer a complete amnesty to the people of Jerusalem, on the sole condition of surrender. One of the envoys was killed by the Zealots, the other was driven off with sticks and stones.

Meantime Cestius advanced his troops within a mile of the northern side of Jerusalem, and then, at Agrippa's intercession, he waited three days to give the city time to consider his proposition to surrender. After that he made his attack, and took possession of one of the suburbs.

The defenders of the city abandoned its outer walls, and concentrated their strength within the walls of the Temple. Cestius, emboldened by knowing that a large party who dreaded the triumph of the insurgents, were within the city, carried on at first a languid attack. But at length he roused himself to more vigorous action. The fight from the Temple cloisters became terrible. From the tops of

these cloisters the Jews hurled arrows, stones, and javelins on the Roman legionaries, and repeatedly repulsed them. Then the Romans formed what was called a *testudo*. It was a roof of shields, each row fitting over the other like scales. Protected by this device, the soldiers began to undermine the wall of the Temple, and attempted to set fire to its gates. The insurgents were becoming discouraged, and the peace party was planning to open the gates to Cestius, when he suddenly sounded an order to retreat. History has never known what induced him to draw off his forces at the moment of apparent victory. It may have been the feeling at that time prevalent among Roman generals, warned by the disgrace and death of the victorious Corbulo, that a conqueror was more likely to lose the favor of the mad Emperor Nero, than he who suffered a defeat.

As soon as the Jews found Cestius was retreating they fell upon his army in great numbers. On the third day he decided to abandon his camp at Gabaon and to descend the mountain on its northern side. That his retreat might be rapid, he ordered his soldiers to throw away everything but their arms.

The passage of the Romans through the mountain passes was like the celebrated retreat of the British army through the Khyber Pass in January, 1842. The Jews crowded the hilltops, and cast their missiles down on the toiling and discouraged Roman host as the Afghans from the summit of their precipices fired down upon the British army. Flight and resistance were alike impossible. All that could be done was to struggle on. The whole Roman army must have perished, like the British army in the mountains of Afghanistan, had not darkness intervened to save them. The Jews ceased their attack when the light failed, and such Romans as could disengage themselves from the defiles made their way into the deserted camp at Bethhoron. But there the wearied soldiers were not suffered to repose. Headed by their commander they marched on through the night — all but four hundred, who were left to deceive the

Jews by watchfires and the display of ensigns. These all met death when at break of day the Jews discovered that the main body of their enemies had escaped out of their hands.

The Jewish leaders who had most distinguished themselves on this occasion were the two princes of Adiabene and two former officers of Herod Agrippa, Silas and Niger. Simon, the son of Gioras, who afterwards became a noted insurgent, and indeed was considered by the Romans the Jewish chief commander in after days, hung on the rear of the retreating army, cutting off stragglers, and beasts laden with supplies.

This defeat of Roman legions by undisciplined insurgents and fanatics was unparalleled in Roman history. It took place in November, A.D. 66. The defeated army made its way to Antipatris, while the Jews, loaded with spoils, exultant, and now confident that the fulfilment of the predictions of their prophets was at hand, returned in triumph to their city. Cestius died not long after; Tacitus hints that he owed his death to his disgrace.

Josephus, a member of the Conservative party, which was unable to restrain the populace in Jerusalem, joined his colleagues in endeavoring to obtain some influence over his fellow-citizens by not openly opposing them. Their victory over Cestius was, he says, the calamity of the whole nation, "for those who were for war were so far elated with their success that they had hopes of finally conquering the Romans." Their temporary triumph, on the other hand, stirred up their enemies, and throughout the East led to the most terrible massacres.

Meantime an attempt in Jerusalem was made to form something like a national government by re-establishing the authority of the Sanhedrim, which held its meetings in the Temple.

Friends and followers of the Herodian family, and the adherents of Agrippa, left the city. The princes of Adiabene also joined Cestius, who sent them to Cæsar to render him an account of what had taken place in Palestine.

Nero was then in Achaia, where he had gone to complete his artistic triumphs by carrying off all the prizes in the Grecian games, in athletics, chariot-driving, theatrical representations, and above all, as a public singer.

He is, in this year A.D. 66, thus characterized in the volume entitled "Antichrist," by M. Renan.[1] In Rome at court, "with Petronius had disappeared everything that could be called taste, tact, or courtesy. Colossal self-love gave Nero a burning thirst to grasp at every sort of glory in the world; so that, says Suetonius, he was 'the rival of any man who could in any way touch the fancy of the vulgar.' He pursued those who attracted public attention with a bitter jealousy; to succeed, in no matter what, came to be a crime against the State. It is said that he even tried to stop the sale of Lucan's works. He aspired to such fame as never had been known; 'eager for things incredible,' says Tacitus. Vast projects were revolving in his head,—to cut through the isthmus of Corinth, to dig a canal from Baiæ to Ostia, to discover the sources of the Nile."

There is no need to dwell on the fantastic freaks of Nero at this period; we have all been made thoroughly acquainted with them in the pages of "Quo Vadis."

He was a man of some natural talent, but over-educated in a superficial way; intrusted early with autocratic power, with no public opinion, religion, or code of morality to impose any check on his caprices, and when insanity unsettled his intellect it took the form of overmastering personal vanity.

He had been only a few days in Greece, when news reached him of the defeat of Cestius. He was so absorbed in the contemplation of fresh triumphs in the arena, that he received with indifference tidings of the discomfiture of Roman legions. He did not seem at first to understand that if the East, emboldened by the unlooked-for successes

[1] The design of this volume is to point out that Nero was the Antichrist of the Apocalypse,—that that mysterious book is rather historical than prophetical, and that it was written about this period.

of the Jews, should burst into a flame, his empire might soon crumble to pieces. Those around him, however, convinced him that it was necessary to send speedily to the war an experienced general. But this general must be a man who could in no respect be Nero's rival, — a man whom the most brilliant success as a military commander could never convert into Nero's supplanter.

Such a man was not far to seek. At that very moment he was in the court circle at Athens, but for the moment he was under the emperor's grave displeasure; so much so that, when an imperial functionary came to announce to him his appointment to command the armies in Syria, he thought he beheld in him a messenger of death.

Titus Flavius Vespasianus was a man of low birth, and of *bourgeois* manners. He had risen by honesty, fidelity, and military ability to the highest offices, both in civil life and in the army. He had fought with great bravery and distinction in Germany, and his campaign in Britain had procured a triumph for the Emperor Claudius, who appropriated the honor due to his general. But on a public occasion when Nero was exhibiting his fine voice to an applauding audience, he had fallen asleep, for he was sixty years of age, and inclined to somnolency.

He had made a marriage which, although it allied him with the family of the Flavii, was no passport to good society, and he had two sons: Titus and Domitian. The former of these was a young man of handsome person, brilliant parts, high-vaulting ambition, and social aspirations.

A new legate, Mucian by name, was appointed to succeed Cestius in Syria, and Vespasian, having despatched his son Titus to bring him fresh troops from Alexandria, travelled over-land with all speed to Syria.

The Sanhedrim selected as governors of the various districts of Judea men of mark and influence. Two of the chief-priests (in other words, two of the leading nobles) were sent to Idumea, superseding Niger of Perea, although he had acquired reputation in the first encounter with Cestius; an Essene was appointed over the district border-

ing the Dead Sea, inhabited by his coreligionists; three other men of influential families were selected to control and govern smaller toparchies; while Galilee, the most important of all, was intrusted to Josephus, with the assistance of two colleagues, Judas and Joazar.

The Sanhedrim must have felt great confidence in the ability and zeal of this young man, then only thirty-three, for Galilee was their most important post, the most turbulent of the provinces, the one certain to be first invaded by the Romans. It did not disqualify Josephus that he was known to be a friend of King Agrippa, whose dominions adjoined Galilee, and who had within its borders three important cities.

"The province of Galilee," says Dean Milman, "was divided into two districts, called Upper and Lower Galilee. It contained all the territory which had belonged to the northern tribes of Napthali, Zebulon, Issachar, and half Manasseh, reaching to the district of Ptolemais on the north and Samaria on the south. The Jordan was its eastern limit. The people were a bold, hardy, and warlike race, considered somewhat barbarous by the inhabitants of the metropolis, and speaking a harsh and guttural dialect of the Syro-Chaldean language, which was the vernacular tongue of Palestine. The country was remarkably rich, abounding in pasture, corn land, and fruits of every description. The population was very great. Its people lived in cities which were numerous and large, and in great open villages, 'the least of which,' says Josephus, 'contained 15,000 inhabitants.' In many of these cities there was a mingled population of Syrians and Jews, rarely on an amicable footing, often forming fierce and hostile factions. Sepphoris was the capital, but that rank was disputed by Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee."

Josephus at once set himself to bring both the civil and military administration of his province into an organized system. He appointed seventy men of wealth and influence to form a sort of provincial Sanhedrim, and seven local magistrates in each city for the administration of

justice. In pursuance of a policy kept up by Oriental rulers to the present day, he enlisted the services of the bands of outlaws (that is, patriots, insurgents, robbers, or brigands) in the cause of order and government. He strengthened the fortifications of many cities, raised and equipped an army of 100,000 men, and did his best to drill and organize them after the pattern of the Roman legions. But all that he attempted in the way of good government was opposed by a certain John of Gischala, the chief of a formidable band of Zealots, to which he would only admit men distinguished for strength, bravery, or warlike skill.

Josephus early in his administration was beset by difficulties concerning the beautiful city of Tiberias. Its rival, Sepphoris, was held by the insurgent Jews to be too much in sympathy with the Romans. The children of the principal citizens of that place had been carried off to Cæsarea by Cestius, as hostages for its good behavior. It was therefore maintained by many persons that Tiberias should be considered the capital of Galilee.

Josephus, who, as a member of the priestly caste, could not lawfully enter the city of Tiberias, adorned as it was with heathen statues, set up around the palace built by Herod, besides being built on a site defiled by dead men's bones, sent for its chief citizens to meet him beyond its walls; and, being desirous of taking up his residence in Tiberias in case of need, he desired the destruction of Herod's palace, though it was now the personal property of King Agrippa.

There were three fierce factions in Tiberias: one desirous of remaining faithful to Agrippa, to whom Nero had made over their city; the war faction, which was clamorous to engage the Romans; while a third party was under Justus, who subsequently wrote a history of the war in Galilee which is now lost. He was in all things the opponent of Josephus, and his first object was to raise Tiberias, in opposition to Sepphoris, to become the capital of Galilee.

The leading men of Tiberias, summoned by Josephus, opposed him in the matter of Herod's palace, but a large

part of the population were eager for its destruction, stimulated at once by fanaticism and the hope of plunder. They razed the obnoxious building to the ground, looted its costly furniture, then rose upon the Syrians who were residents in the city, and massacred all who fell into their hands.

Josephus was very angry at the plunder of the palace. He collected as far as possible all the valuables it had contained, — candlesticks of Corinthian brass, royal tables, uncoined silver, etc., — and consigned them to the citizen who stood highest in the favor and confidence of Agrippa.

The history of the administration of Josephus in Galilee may be found at length both in his "Wars of the Jews" and in his autobiography. It may be sufficient here to say that in everything he was opposed by Justus of Tiberias, and John of Gischala.

At Tarichæa, where he forced a band of robbers to restore spoils that they had taken from a servant of King Agrippa, he was set upon by their sympathizers, and deserted by his friends. He saved himself by his address and presence of mind. But the two accounts we have of these events (both of them written by Josephus himself) are confused and inconsistent with each other.

Meantime, Herod's palace and its statues having been destroyed, Josephus could venture into Tiberias. There, as he was about to address the people from a rostrum, a crowd, incited by a band of John of Gischala's men, surrounded the place, dragged him down from the rostrum, and were about to murder him, when he eluded their grasp, gained the lake, sprang into a boat, pushed out from the shore, and was in safety.

By this time the Romans, who, since the disgrace of Cestius, had allowed matters to drift into anarchy in Palestine, took part once more in its conflicts. A Roman army advanced against Josephus, while at the same time his fellow-countrymen in Jerusalem were plotting his ruin. Their plots failed entirely. On every point Josephus triumphed, and despatched a delegation of one hundred

influential citizens of Galilee, attended by a guard of five hundred of his soldiers, to plead his cause at Jerusalem.

In the Iliad and the Odyssey we repeatedly read high praise of "wily Ulysses," — "Ulysses of many devices." To no military man in authentic history, could these terms have been more fitly applied than to Josephus. His successful "devices" seem to have been innumerable. He relied on them to obviate the necessity for a great effusion of blood. He relates them with the utmost self-complacency. But while doing his duty in his province, strengthening and disciplining his army, endeavoring to introduce order into the administration of justice, and putting down the robber bands that infested the country — making Galilee, in short, ready for whatever fate might be in store for her — Josephus in his heart believed in the impossibility of effectually resisting the mighty power of Rome; especially when the little nation engaged in that resistance had drawn down upon itself the full weight of Roman vengeance by disgrace and defeat inflicted on the imperial legions.

When Vespasian marshalled his forces at Antioch, Josephus, in Galilee, made ready to oppose him; but it was with the conviction that he was upholding a lost cause.

This was in the year A. D. 67, though it is difficult to make out dates in the accounts we have of the campaign of Vespasian in Galilee.

In Jerusalem during this time, arms were being manufactured with the utmost diligence, Ananus the high-priest taking the lead in warlike preparations. The walls of the city were strengthened, military engines were made, those captured from Cestius were put in good repair, and stores of provisions were laid up in the city.

Simon, the son of Gioras, a robber rather than a patriot, had begun to assume authority, but had been forced to confine his ravages to Idumea, where he strengthened himself in the fortress of Masada.

Sepphoris was lost by the Jews early in the Galilean campaign. Vespasian's army was composed of the three most distinguished legions, the fifth, tenth, and fifteenth.

He had, besides, Arabian archers and a large body of Arabian light horse. His army, exclusive of the servants who were trained to serve as soldiers, was about 60,000. The strongest place in Galilee was Jotopata, a well fortified little city in the hills. For many centuries its site could not be identified, but it is now believed to have occupied the same ground as an unimportant village called Judifat. But when Vespasian invaded Galilee it made a most astonishing resistance. Josephus threw himself into it with the bravest of the Galilean warriors. Jotopata was in a mountain district, and was approachable only by almost impassable roads, but the soldiers of Vespasian cut a military road right through an opposite mountain, and in five days Jotopata lay open to their attacks.

I have not space to give here the particulars of this memorable siege; they may be read at full length in the pages of Josephus, or in those of Dean Milman's "History of the Jews." "On one side," says the later writer, "fought desperation; on the other the haughty shame of having once been defeated by such a foe."

Vespasian had with him 160 military engines, the most formidable of which was his enormous battering-ram, an immense beam headed with iron fashioned like the head of a ram. This beam was suspended by cables from another beam, supported by great posts. It was drawn backward by a large force of men, and then driven forward by so tremendous a recoil that, as Dean Milman says, "the Romans were accustomed to see the bulwarks of the strongest cities crumble as it were to dust the instant they could bring that formidable machine into action."

As it advanced near the walls of Jotopata the besieged made frantic attempts to burn it; nor was Josephus wanting in an ingenious device to mitigate its power. One man with an immense stone struck off its iron head; then he leaped down from the wall, and managed to secure the trophy, but fell dead from his wounds as he held it aloft in triumph, in full sight of all the Jews and of the Roman army.

Boiling oil was poured down on the Roman soldiers, which drove them frantic as it trickled beneath their breast-plates, which they could not tear off before it had well scalded them. Those so assailed leaped and writhed in anguish; many threw themselves from the bridges. They became furious at the obstinate resistance of this little stronghold in the mountains. Vespasian at last gave orders that on the high embankment round the city fifty towers should be built, strongly girded with iron. From these his javelin men, his slingers, and his archers discharged their missiles at every Jew who showed himself upon the walls.

At last discouragement fell on the defenders of Jotopata. They learned that a stronghold, or city, at no great distance, called Japha, had been reduced by a detachment of Vespasian's army. The women of the place were reserved for slaves, 15,000 of the men were killed, and about 2000 were sent to Nero to be employed on the great work of cutting a canal through the Isthmus of Corinth, which was one of his magnificent plans.

For once the Samaritans, driven to desperation by Roman oppression, made common cause with the Jews, but suffered a bloody defeat.

Jotopata had held out forty-seven days against the best general and the most distinguished legions in the Roman army, but on July 1, A. D. 67, it was taken by surprise in the early dawn of a misty morning. The Romans lost but one man. There was little or no resistance; the inhabitants gave themselves up quietly to be butchered. Many died by their own hands.

The Romans vindictively remembered what they had suffered from the fierce sallies of the Jews during the siege, and were little disposed to show them mercy. Mercy and compassion, indeed, were not qualities characteristic of Vespasian, though they lay latent in the breast of his son Titus.[1]

[1] A very full account of the siege of Jotopata may found in Josephus, and in Dean Milman's "History of the Jews," as well as

Among the dead, and in the caverns underground, the Romans made search for Josephus. Vespasian had given especial orders to have him taken, but at last it began to be believed that, foreseeing the capture of the city, he had in some mysterious way effected his escape. During the general confusion he had indeed jumped into a dry well, and thence found his way into a long cavern which led to a place where forty men of rank and influence in Jotopata had taken refuge, having supplied themselves with a small store of provisions.

On the third day of this confinement Josephus was startled by hearing his name called from the entrance to the cavern. His hiding-place had been disclosed by a woman; and Vespasian had despatched two of his staff to offer him his life if he would surrender. At last by the persuasions of one of them, a tribune whom he had formerly known, and who guaranteed to him the good faith of the general, he expressed his willingness to yield himself a prisoner. Josephus had had some reputation among his people as an interpreter of dreams. During the siege he had one night dreamed that in forty-seven days Jotopata would fall, that he himself would escape death, and that Vespasian, the Roman general, would be elevated to the throne of the Cæsars. This idea was indeed already in men's minds. It was evident to all that the Roman Empire could only be maintained in its integrity by having at its head an experienced military commander; and that ruler, according to an idea prevalent both in the East and in the West, was in some way to be connected with Jerusalem or Judea.

But the forty men in the cavern with Josephus would not suffer him to surrender. They implored him not to die a traitor to his country, but to meet death as their chieftain. Seeing that their place of refuge was discovered, and that

minute details of the subsequent siege and capture of Jerusalem. These details would be very interesting, but that our souls sicken when we read of horrors upon horrors, for which reason I have, as far as possible, spared my readers.

the Roman soldiers were about to light a fire at the entrance, and to suffocate them in the smoke, they resolved to die by each other's hands.

Josephus tells us that he made them on this occasion a long and eloquent oration against suicide, which was, however, lost upon his hearers, who at first ran at him with their drawn swords, but at length yielded to a proposition he made them to draw lots. He who had the first lot was to slay him who held the second, to be himself killed by the third. Finally two only were left alive, Josephus and the man who was to kill him. This time the eloquence of Josephus was not in vain. The other man consented to accept the Roman terms, and they came forth together. Josephus was immediately led into the presence of Vespasian, the Roman soldiers flocking round him with threats of vengeance, while their officers, struck by his bold bearing, and admiring the resources and energy which he had shown during the siege, were moved in his favor. Especially was this the case with Titus, a young man almost of his own age, already under the influence of Berenice, whom he had met at Antioch, and disposed to favor and protect, for her sake, a man of her own Asmonean race, her most distinguished countryman.

Vespasian ordered his prisoner to be securely guarded, and proposed to send him to Nero, now in Rome. But Josephus at once requested a private audience. All present retired except Titus and two officers.

Then Josephus rose to the occasion, and assumed the air and language of a prophet. He assured his hearers that nothing had prevented him from dying the death of a noble Jew, but his conviction that he had a message to deliver from the Lord Almighty. Then he announced to Vespasian and his son that by God's will they should speedily assume imperial dignity. He implored them, therefore, not to send him to Nero, but to keep him in chains as their own prisoner until his prophecy should be verified by the event.

This and the knowledge that he had during the siege

prophesied the capture of the city in forty-seven days, led to his kind treatment. And indeed how great would have been the world's loss, had Josephus perished!

Vespasian's plan of campaign was to drive all fighting men whom he failed to subdue, into Jerusalem, and then, when Palestine lay helpless at his mercy, to await the right moment for completing the overthrow of the entire Jewish nation by a decisive blow directed against their capital and their Temple.

During the remaining two months of the year A. D. 67, he continued to capture city after city along the sea-coast, and in Galilee. Tiberias and Tarichæa on the lake, were at first spared, because they owed allegiance to Agrippa. But at last, after a formidable body of insurgents had taken refuge in the latter city, a most bloody conflict took place upon that peaceful lake on the waters of which Jesus thirty years before had walked, by whose shores He had preached, and told His disciples parables illustrated from the natural beauty and the rural life around them. Now the blue waters of the lake were tinged red with Jewish blood.

Vespasian broke faith with the people of Tarichæa. They surrendered under promise of amnesty, but he marched all John of Gischala's insurgents out of the city, and murdered them on the road.

Gamala was built on the Lake of Galilee, opposite to Tarichæa. Its situation was one of almost impregnable strength, and Josephus had supplemented its natural advantages. In vain, when Vespasian had encompassed it with his legions, Agrippa appeared before its walls, and offered terms to its defenders. He was struck by a stone on his right elbow, and this exasperated the Roman soldiers, with whom he was popular. The fighting was fierce, and the Romans had not always the advantage. Some leading Roman generals were slain, and the Roman legions grew despondent. But the event could not long be doubtful. In the end the Jewish leaders met their death, the city was taken, the inhabitants, men, women, and children, were put to the sword, or died by precipitating themselves from

a high rock on which they had sought refuge. The Romans scaled the rock, 4000 of the refugees were killed by the sword; and 5000 bodies were found beneath the precipice. On September 23, A. D. 67, Gamala fell.

But Gischala still held out. There John of Gischala commanded a strong faction. Titus was sent against the city, and perceiving that he could easily take it by assault, preferred to avoid bloodshed by offering terms of capitulation. John of Gischala, with unexpected readiness, answered from the wall that the city accepted his terms, and the next day would surrender, but as it was the Sabbath, nothing could be formally concluded without infringing the Jewish law. To this Titus agreed, and withdrew his troops for the night.

Then John of Gischala with all his men marched out of the city under cover of the darkness, abandoning their women and children on the road, while the men pushed on to a place of safety.

When Titus appeared the next day before Gischala he was received by the inhabitants as a deliverer. He sent horsemen at once in pursuit of John. These killed a great number of his followers, and brought back 3000 women and children.

John of Gischala made his way into Jerusalem. "Better would it have been," writes Dean Milman, "if he had perished in the trenches of his native town, or been captured by the enemy." Meantime Vespasian retired into winter quarters at Cæsarea.

CHAPTER XXII.

NEARING THE END.

AS we read accounts of what took place in Jerusalem during the years A.D. 68, 69, and 70, we are unavoidably reminded of events in Paris during the Commune. If we know the history of the Commune in our own times, we may be said to know that of the factions in Jerusalem.

Vespasian, who went into winter quarters at the close of the year A.D. 67, remained to all appearances strangely inactive. After the campaign in Galilee he did not press forward to Jerusalem. The reason was probably that as great events were impending in the capital, and his own elevation to the imperial throne was a matter of political intrigue among his friends, he was unwilling to divide his forces, but preferred to keep his legions together, and "to stand by," as sailors say, for any emergency.

Renan thus speaks of the state of feeling at this time throughout the Roman Empire: —[1]

"The camps were full of politics; the empire was for sale to the highest bidder. In Nero's day there were occasions when might be seen in one assembly seven future emperors, and the father of an eighth.[2] Galba, an honest old general, who refused to be a party to the military revel, soon perished. The soldiers had for a moment the idea of killing all the senators, to simplify the task of government."

The troops in Spain, under Galba, revolted in April, A.D. 68; the legions in Gaul, under Vindex, were already in

[1] Antichrist, chapter xviii., p. 371.

[2] Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, Nerva, and the father of Trajan.

revolt. "This news, which reached Nero while at dinner, struck him like a thunderbolt. His first acts were those of a spoiled child in a passion. In the absurd preparations which he began to make for flight, his first care was for his musical instruments and for his stage equipments. He made his women dress like Amazons, in skins, carrying axes, with their hair cut short. . . . He had no idea which was not childish. At times he thought, not of resistance, but of going unarmed to weep before his enemies, fancying that he might move them; and already he was composing a song of victory which should celebrate peace and reconciliation. At other times he wished to massacre the whole Senate, burn Rome a second time, and during the conflagration turn loose upon the city the wild beasts of the amphitheatre. . . . From time to time he thought of changing the seat of empire, and retiring to Alexandria. He called to mind that certain prophecies had seemed to promise him an empire in the East, and in particular the kingdom of Jerusalem."[1]

But when the pretorians in Rome revolted and proclaimed Galba emperor, he could not but feel that all was lost. The story of his last days as told by M. Renan in his "Antichrist" is pathetic in the extreme. His insanity took the form of childishness, with reminiscences of scraps of learning laid up in his memory, in earlier, happier days. He thought himself acting a tragedy. The play came to an end with his death at the age of thirty-one, after a reign of thirteen years and eight months. His remains were secretly, but sumptuously, buried by the care of Acte, the woman who had loved him.

Galba, grave, frugal, and austere, was proclaimed emperor by the revolted soldiery, but popular admiration of Nero in the end carried the day; the elderly soldier was murdered, and Otho was made emperor. "The soldiers and all who loved Nero," says M. Renan, "found their idol in him. The worthless Vitellius had, however, been proclaimed in Germany a few days before Otho, and he

[1] The quotations in this chapter are from Renan's "Antichrist."

did not withdraw his claim. A horrible civil war, such as had not been seen since that between Augustus and Antony, seemed inevitable. The world reeked with blood. The first battle between the rivals which left the empire to Vitellius alone, cost the lives of 80,000 men. Disbanded legionaries pillaged the country, and fought among themselves. Prophecies and prognostics seemed everywhere to abound. Certain words of Jesus repeated in secret among Christians kept them constantly in expectation. Above all, the fate of Jerusalem seemed an object with them of extreme anxiety and concern."

Among men of sense and character there was a strong feeling growing up in favor of Vespasian, and no doubt he had himself been much impressed, not only by the prophecy of Josephus, but by its accordance with other prophecies, put forth in the East by heathen oracles and by the Magi. The Jews by the iteration of their prophecies had produced a popular opinion that the master of the world must come from Judea, and that the East would gain the day. "Vespasian and Titus in the midst of Jews listened readily to such words, and took pleasure in them. While displaying their military talent against the fanatics in Jerusalem they had a strong attraction towards Judaism, studied it, and paid deference to the Jewish books. Josephus had found his way into their companionship, especially that of Titus, through his soft, easy, and insinuating temper. He boasted before them of his Law, told them the old Scripture stories, which he often set forth in Greek style, and spoke mysteriously of the Prophecies."

In the spring of A.D. 69 Vespasian roused himself from the military inactivity in which he was held by uncertainty as to his prospects of political advancement, and marched his army to within sight of Jerusalem. His lieutenant, Cerealis, had ravaged Idumea and burnt Hebron. All Judea was in possession of the Romans with the exception of its capital and Herod's three strongholds, Masada, Herodium, and Machærus. But even when Vespasian found himself before Jerusalem he hesitated to make an

attack upon it. Of no great military importance in the days of its kings, or of its Persian and Egyptian rulers, it was now the strongest fortified city in the East. To reduce it might take time and strength, and delay would possibly be fatal to the political hopes of Titus, who, in the matter of imperial aspiration, governed Vespasian. The legions were therefore withdrawn, and for the following twelve months Jerusalem was left in the hands of the factions which had already for two long years been fighting each other.

On July 1, A.D. 69, Vespasian was proclaimed emperor in Alexandria; two days later his own army saluted him as Imperator, and by the middle of the month all the East was obedient to him. At a Congress held at Berytus (Beyrout of the present day) it was decided that Mucian, the imperial legate in Syria, should lead troops into Italy; that Titus should prosecute the war against the Jews; and that Vespasian should watch the progress of events in Alexandria.

So disorganized had the empire become by the extravagances of Nero, and his imitators, Otho and Vitellius, that Rome had grown willing to welcome the accession of "a good honest man, of undistinguished rank, who had laboriously made his way by his own merit — in spite of his little awkwardnesses, his vulgar looks, and his want of manners."

When John of Gischala, after his hasty flight from Galilee, made his way, at the head of his band of Zealots, into Jerusalem, the multitude poured out of the city gates to meet him, as much from eagerness to hear his news as to welcome his coming.

Weary and travel-stained as his men were, they assumed a haughty demeanor, declaring that they had not fled from Galilee, but had retreated to Jerusalem, being unwilling to risk the lives of their nation's bravest men in petty conflicts for the defence of worthless villages. This view of the matter was popularly accepted. The party of the Zealots was already powerful in Jerusalem, and the men

of Galilee were an important addition to their strength. John argued that the Roman army, discouraged and enfeebled by its efforts to subdue small Galilean cities, would easily be repelled with disgrace from before Jerusalem. The young men were carried away by the eloquence and enthusiasm of the Zealot leader; the old men sat silent and disheartened.

Jerusalem was at that time divided into two parties, the conservatives and the revolutionists — or, as Josephus calls the latter, the innovators. In the country surrounding the city ranged robber bands of Sicarii and Assassins, plundering and slaying, under pretext that they were engaged in punishing renegades and traitors. Alas! Judas Maccabæus had in this respect set them a bad example; and this one error in his heroic career was bearing evil fruit after he had been dead two hundred and thirty years.

Before long the Assassins gathered together in Jerusalem; robberies, burglaries, murders, and assaults took place there day by day. Men of the highest rank, and, above all, members of the Herodian family, were seized and murdered. The prisons were crowded with victims, who, it was hoped, by fear of cruelty and dread of death might be induced to countenance their persecutors. But, when not one would save himself by baseness, the party that had triumphed (like the French fanatics in September, 1792) sent ruffians into the prisons to massacre their captives.

The dominant party next interfered with the legal distinctions between man and man in the offices of the priesthood. They selected, in deference to popular opinion, ignoble men to seats in the Sanhedrim, and at length they presumed to depose Matthias, the son of Theophilus, who had been high-priest for two years, and appointed by lot one Phannias, a stone-cutter, an ignorant peasant, whose appearance when they led him forth, awkward and bewildered in his official robes, moved the laughter of the multitude.

But this last act of profanity and folly roused a feeling

in Jerusalem which strengthened the conservatives, whose chief men were Jesus of Gamara, and Ananus, a descendant of the Annas who took part in the condemnation of our Saviour. These men called an assembly in one of the courts of the Temple. Ananus addressed it in an eloquent oration, but the Sicarii broke in as he was speaking, and attacked those who were organizing to oppose their violence. At once a civil conflict broke out all over the city. Both parties fought fiercely. The Sicarii gained possession of the Temple, and thither their wounded were brought, dripping blood over the sacred pavement. The Temple itself became the scene of conflict. Into the inner court — where stood the Altar of Sacrifice — the insurgents pressed, and closed the massive gates of the Sanctuary. Thither religious scruples restrained Ananus from allowing his men to follow them. John of Gischala, now nominally joined the party of Ananus, but he kept up secret relations with the Assassins, and betrayed to them all the counsels of the other party. Those he professed to help, however, soon began to doubt him. They endeavored to ensure his faithfulness by making him take a solemn oath not to betray them, after which he was still more trusted by his dupes, until, being sent by Ananus to parley with the insurgents, he threw off the mask, and openly declared himself to be on their side. He offered to be their leader, denounced those of the opposite party, and inflamed his hearers to madness by his eloquent words.

By his advice messengers were sent to the Idumeans, a fierce, turbulent, mixed race, with Arab blood in their veins, begging their assistance and promising them abundant plunder in Jerusalem. At once the Idumeans flew to arms, and twenty thousand of them marched to Jerusalem.

The party of reason found themselves between two opposing armies, — the insurgents within and the Idumeans without the city, who proclaimed that they were acting against false Jews who were plotting to deliver up Jerusalem to the Romans.

But while the Idumeans waited without the walls, ex-

pecting that the allies who had summoned them would open the city gates, a terrible thunder-storm, which seemed to manifest the wrath of the Almighty, descended on the city. The Idumeans locked their shields, and defended themselves as well as they could from the pitiless pelting of the rain, and the fury of the elements. Ananus, who had kept careful watch for many days and nights over the gates which divided the insurgents from the more sacred portions of the Temple, had, in the confusion of that awful storm, relaxed his vigilance. The Zealots took advantage of his negligence. A few bold men sawed through the bars that held the gates. The noise of the tempest drowned that which they made by sawing. Then they crept forth, and stole along the streets to one of the gates of the city. There, too, they sawed through the bars, and let in the Idumeans, who, fearing a surprise, had made ready to attack them. A general massacre would have at once taken place, but that the few daring men who had come forth from the interior of the Temple besought their allies to begin by setting their imprisoned comrades within the Temple at liberty. When this was done terror and confusion reigned in the city. The storm still raged; women shrieked in the streets, the Zealots and the Idumeans shouted in triumph, the rain fell furiously, the wind howled, lightning flashed, and thunder pealed. Such storms are unusual in the East, and always inspire terror.

The fight went on within the sacred precincts of the Temple. When all was over, 8500 dead bodies lay on the blood-stained pavement. Then the Idumeans plundered the city. They seized Ananus and Jesus of Gamara, and a number of the prominent citizens, put them to death, and stripping the bodies flung them over the wall, to be the prey of dogs and vultures, — the last indignity in ancient warfare.

Like a band of wild wolves the Zealots, Sicarii, and Idumeans continued to rage through the unhappy city. Old men and men of rank or wealth were seized, tortured, and then put to death. It was indeed a Reign of Terror.

No man — no woman — dared even to lament the dead. Josephus says that in those days perished twelve thousand of the noblest in Jerusalem.

At last, even as Danton, shocked by the September massacres, prayed the Convention to authorize a Revolutionary tribunal and give to the accused some form of trial, the Idumeans insisted that their allies the Zealots should establish a Sanhedrim. Before it, was first brought Zacharias, the son of Baruch, a man upright, patriotic, and religious. He defended himself with eloquence and spirit, and was unanimously acquitted. This did not satisfy the Zealots and Sicarii. Two of them rushed forward and struck him dead.

After this, even the Idumeans grew weary of the work of bloodshed, and were disgusted with their accomplices. They declared that they had come into Jerusalem to suppress the treason of the leading men, and to prevent their delivering the city to the Romans, but that they could find no treason, and no Romans were at hand.

They therefore returned home, leaving the Zealots to work their own will, undeterred even by their accomplices' disapproval. Among those whom they at once put to death, was the brave Niger of Perea, who had distinguished himself when Cestius appeared before Jerusalem. "He was dragged through the streets, showing in vain the scars he had received for his ungrateful country. He died with fearful imprecations, summoning the Romans to avenge his death, and denouncing famine, pestilence, and civil massacre, as well as war, against this accursed city."[1]

While these horrors were in progress, Vespasian was urged by many to march forward to Jerusalem, and bring them to an end; but, like Bismarck when similarly urged to make a furious assault on Paris during the Franco-Prussian war, he replied that the rage of the factions would destroy the city without sacrificing the lives of some thousands of his soldiers. He would allow them time to tear each other to pieces like wild beasts in a closed den.

[1] Dean Milman's "History of the Jews."

All this time John of Gischala was exercising the authority of a dictator. Some he cajoled, some he held in fear by a sort of irresistible imperiousness. A party of his followers formed his body-guard, and treated him as if he were their king; while others in their intercourse with him affected fraternity and equality.

The Sicarii in the neighboring country, strong in their possession of Herod's fortress of Masada, grew bolder than ever. It was the spring of A. D. 69, and Vespasian, yielding to the entreaties of the men around him, especially to those of the unhappy refugees from Jerusalem, commenced a campaign in Palestine. He was unwilling, as we have seen, to risk the strength of his army in the siege of so strong and stubborn a place as Jerusalem, while his political future was in doubt. He obtained a bloody success, however, on the banks of the Jordan, at the spot where the children of Israel had passed over dryshod under the leadership of Joshua, and at length his troops appeared before beautiful Jericho — the city of palm-trees. Of Jericho in the days of our Saviour Dr. Stapfer says: —

"It was not further away from Jerusalem than Versailles is from Paris. It was and long continued to be one of the most charming spots in Syria. Josephus says of it, as of Galilee, 'It is a divine country.' No where else did palm-trees grow in such beauty and luxuriance. They formed a great wood surrounding the city on all sides, not to speak of the gardens and cultivated fields, the beauty and fruitfulness of which were the admiration of antiquity. As it stood at the head of a route, it was an important seat of customs. Thus the episode of Zaccheus belongs to it naturally. The Jordan flowed by, shut in between bare rocks. The whole of its valley, as well as the plain of Jericho had the climate of the tropics, and the city, situated below the level of the Mediterranean, enjoyed perpetual spring. The cold that prevails on the surrounding highlands was there unknown." [2]

Wherever Vespasian went his course was marked by

[2] "Palestine in the time of Christ," by Edward Stapfer, D.D.

extreme severity. He showed no mercy to the Jews, and Titus was not by his side to plead for them.

Every moment the inhabitants of Jerusalem expected to see from their walls the advance of the Roman eagles, but still they came not. The day of vengeance was delayed. Vespasian withdrew his troops to Cæsarea, and waited to see what the next turn in the wheel of fortune might have in store for him. Meantime a worse enemy than the Romans was invited by the Jews themselves into their city.

This enemy was Simon, the son of Gioras, and his band of outlaws. He was a man fierce and cruel, a born leader of brigands, without the eloquence or skill in leadership of John of Gischala, of whom he became the rival. He had distinguished himself three years before when the Jews gained their memorable advantage over Cestius Gallus, but in the confusion that followed he gathered together a band of outlaws, wasted Idumea, and threatened Jerusalem.

The Zealots had by a surprise captured his wife and held her in Jerusalem as a hostage. Simon was beside himself with rage. He wreaked vengeance on every inhabitant of the city who fell into his hands. He threatened the most dire vengeance if his wife were not returned to him. The city was filled with alarm, the woman was restored, and Simon, with his army of outlaws, went away.

In the spring of A. D. 70 Simon again appeared in arms outside the walls of Jerusalem. The hardy Galilean Zealots, followers of John of Gischala, had become enervated by success. "They had all the cruelty of men with the wantonness of abandoned women." There were many Idumeans left in Jerusalem. They resented the behavior of the Zealots, they grew restive under the rule of John. They drove most of his followers into a palace built by one of the princes of Adiabene, they entered the gates with them, fought them, and plundered the palace, which contained the ill-gotten treasures of John. The Zealots with their leader Eleazar, desperate and fierce, held the Temple and determined to resist the Idumeans, and those inhabi-



VESPASIAN.

tants of Jerusalem who were now stirred up to oppose their tyranny. In a council presided over by chief-priests it was resolved to call in Simon Bar-Gioras and his band of robbers. The high-priest Matthias, who had resumed his authority, was sent in person to invite Simon within the walls. The populace welcomed him as a deliverer. Simon at once besieged John and his Zealots in the Temple; but there was another faction encamped within the inner court of the sacred building, more genuine fanatics than the robbers who called themselves Zealots for the Faith, and who had come with John from Galilee. This third party was led by Eleazar, the same priest who had commenced the revolution by inducing his sacerdotal brethren to refuse all offerings made by foreigners and pagans in the Temple, even the customary offerings made by the Roman emperors. The party of Simon without the Temple, and the two parties of John and Eleazar within, made incessant war upon each other. Strange to say, sacrifices continued to be offered, and pious pilgrims came from distant countries to attend the feasts, while warfare uninterruptedly went on. Many worshippers were killed by bolts and missiles shot by the contending factions, and their blood was mingled with their sacrifices, as was said of certain other Galileans in the days of our Lord. There was plenty of food stored in the Temple, and large quantities had been laid up to serve in time of need, but all this was burned, partly by John of Gischala, and partly by Simon Bar-Gioras, each hoping thus to starve the adherents of the other. Nothing could extinguish the wild hopes of success entertained by the fanatics; no reason could assail their confidence. M. Renan concludes the chapter in "Antichrist" which precedes his account of the siege itself with these emphatic words: —

"In vain did the madman Joshua, the son of Hanan, roam day and night through the city, calling on the four winds of heaven to destroy it. Until the eve of their extermination the fanatics proclaimed Jerusalem to be the capital of the earth, — the centre of the world. And what is strang-

est of all, they were not wholly wrong. Those madmen who insisted that the holy city was eternal, when it was already in flames, were far nearer the truth than those who saw in it only insurgents and assassins. They were mistaken as to the military situation *then*, but not as to the religious result in the future. Those disastrous days in fact clearly mark the time when Jerusalem became the spiritual centre of the earth. . . . When revolutions with thunderings and earthquakes are before our eyes let us rank ourselves among the blessed ones, forever singing, "Praise the Lord!" or with the Four Living Creatures, spirits of the Universe, who, after each act of the celestial tragedy, respond AMEN!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.

"AND when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. . . .

"In those days shall be affliction such as was not from the beginning of creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be."

These words of our Lord, spoken as He gazed with His disciples on the city and its glittering Temple, after He had come up to Jerusalem for His last Passover, tell in brief the story of this chapter. As we read it, detailed with some prolixity in the pages of Josephus, it seems as if words could not adequately paint the desolation, the despair, the anarchy, the tyranny, the butchery, and the brutality, that, during the three months that the siege lasted, went on in the devoted city. In secret many prayed for the arrival of the Roman legions, but no one dared to utter such a wish, nor even to be suspected of forming it, even as under the tyranny of the National Convention, in 1793, it would have been unsafe for an inhabitant of Paris to hope for the arrival of the army of Brunswick and the *émigrés*.

At length, early in the spring of A. D. 70, Titus set out from Alexandria and collected his troops at Cæsarea. He had under him four legions,[1] the fifth, tenth, twelfth, and

[1] The legion consisted originally of 3000 soldiers, but it seems to have risen gradually to twice that number. Each legion had also attached to it a considerable body of horsemen. Each was divided into ten cohorts or regiments; each cohort into three maniples or bands; each maniple into three companies of a hundred men each commanded by a centurion. — KITTO'S *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature.*

fifteenth, many Syrian auxiliaries, a multitude of Arab horsemen, and all those Jews who, having escaped the vengeance of their countrymen, had sought refuge with the Romans. The men of the tenth legion were burning to revenge themselves upon the Jews for the disgrace that they had suffered four years before when under Cestius Gallus. Vespasian, confident in the commandership of his son, and in the courage of his soldiers, had but one thing to urge on them, and that was *severity*; "mercy," he said, "was always considered a sign of weakness by those haughty Oriental races, who were convinced that they fought for God, and had God upon their side."

It was in the month of April, a few days before the Passover, that a party of six hundred horsemen, headed by Titus, appeared as a reconnoitring party before Jerusalem. The city was crowded with pilgrims, for neither war nor faction stayed the influx of those who came up yearly to the great feasts. Josephus estimates that one million one hundred thousand Jews were in the city during those terrible three months. Tacitus places their number at six hundred thousand.

Aloft on the highest peak of the triple mountain, first known to us as Mount Moriah, stood the Temple, very strongly fortified, so that it was one of the most impregnable military positions in the world. Its glittering white marble walls and gilded dome made it a conspicuous object from the hills around.

A second mountain peak — Mount Zion, or, as it was called in later times, the Upper City — was surrounded by a wall, defended by the three towers of Herod and the Castle of Antonia. Divided from this by a deep chasm was the lower town, enclosed by a second wall, which at certain points united with the outer wall and the wall of the Temple; and finally there was a third wall projected, and partly built by Herod Agrippa; its construction had, however, been stopped by an order from the Proconsul of Syria. It enclosed a populous suburb on the north side of Jerusalem, called Bezetha. This was the point where Titus determined

to commence his attack, and his base of operations was to be the Mount of Olives. But as he rode quietly along the outside of the massive wall of Agrippa attended by his followers, laying his plans, but half disposed to think that the great body of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, worn out by the furious warfare waged by the three fierce factions, would throw open one of their gates and welcome him as a deliverer, a postern which he had passed was suddenly flung open, and out of it swarmed a furious, excited multitude, cutting him off from his retinue. Darts, arrows, and javelins flew thick around him; he wheeled his horse, and with bravery which called forth the admiration of all who saw him, he cleared his way through the opposing masses. He seemed to bear a charmed life. But the Jews considered this skirmish a great triumph. Cæsar — as they called the son of Vespasian — had been forced to fly! It was, in their eyes, the pledge and promise of their ultimate victory. Titus had not escaped unharmed; he was severely wounded.

From the Far East, from Antioch and Egypt, Asia Minor and Cyprus, thousands of Jews, confiding in the inaction of Vespasian, had flocked to Jerusalem to celebrate this the last Passover. For the last time worshippers approached the Temple gates singing the usual Psalms of Degrees; for the last time they were welcomed by the greeting, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" and answered the priests' welcome with the words, "We have wished you good luck — ye who are of the House of the Lord!"

Many habitual visitors to the Temple, who had been shut out from the great feasts for three years, came up to Jerusalem on this occasion. Alas! as the Rabbi Raphall says: "Who among all that crowd had a presentiment of the fate which awaited them? Who foretold that of all these assembled thousands, few, perhaps none, should return to the homes that they had left? — that the sword, pestilence, or famine should be the doom of most of them, while the few survivors — torn to pieces by wild beasts in the arena, amid the laughter and scoffs of their heartless victors, or

perishing beneath the lash and labor of their Roman task-masters — would envy those whom early death had freed from misery? Yet such was the destiny of these pilgrims, — strangers to the crimes of Jerusalem, but involved in her ruin."

Taught caution, Titus next surrounded the city with embankments, from which to work the battering-rams and other siege engines carefully prepared under the direction of Vespasian during the months that, a year before, he had tarried at Cæsarea.

The leaders of the two principal factions in the city, seeing their danger, agreed to suspend their rivalry, and together attack the common enemy.

Zealots and Idumeans, uniting their forces, poured down upon the Romans, who, unprepared for an attack, were engaged in fortifying themselves at the base of the Mount of Olives. The onset was so unlooked for, and so furious, that the tenth legion, which was raising earth-works, was driven from that sacred hill which we associate only with the last days of our Lord's life, with His prayers, His last preaching, and His ascension. This spot would have been the scene of a signal Roman defeat, and no doubt the quiet streets of Bethany and the shades of the garden of Gethsemane would have run with Roman blood, had it not been for the desperate courage of Titus, whose followers, seeing him surrounded by the enemy and in great danger, saved him from destruction. The Jews contested every foot of ground, but were at length driven back into the city.

On the first day of the Passover, the great feast that was at hand when this fight took place at the base of the Mount of Olives, John of Gischala had the audacity and impiety to make an attack, in the Temple itself, upon Eleazar's priestly Zealots, who were conducting the sacrifices in the inner court of the Temple. Many worshippers from outlying districts and from far-off lands were slain by the sword, or trampled to death upon the sacred pavement, until, John's thirst for blood being appeased, he

came to terms with his rival, in consequence of which the faction of Eleazar coalesced with his own Zealots, and but two opposing parties remained in the city: John's followers within the Temple, and Simon's Idumeans outside.

Titus meantime was employing his men in cutting down the groves and fruit trees round the city. The trees, pink, red, and white with their spring blossoms, fell before the axes of the Romans; landmarks were thrown down; water-courses destroyed; masses of rugged rocks were cast down into "the deep and shady glens" which had been the summer resort of the inhabitants of the city. When this destruction was completed, Titus made ready for his attack. The defenders of the city, who had mounted on their walls all the engines of war that had been taken from Cestius, employed fraud as well as force against their powerful enemy, and must have bitterly exasperated the Romans, whom they several times enticed into traps laid for their discomfiture. Within the Temple John had a force of 6000 of his own Zealots, and 2400 allies, still under the command of Eleazar. Besides these disciplined soldiers, from the great multitude of Jewish pilgrims within the city, there poured forth from time to time a furious, fierce, brave, and disorganized swarm of men, who took part in sallies from the gates, and from the walls hurled down great stones and boiling oil and pitch upon the Roman soldiers. At one time the whole force of the besieged came swarming forth, each man bearing a blazing torch, to set the battering machines on fire. A terrible conflict took place around the engines, which were saved from destruction by the timely arrival of Titus with his body of horse. The young commander was terribly exasperated. In later life he was anxious to be known as an example of clemency, but in his youthful days he was little better than other Romans of his period; besides which, his father, Vespasian, had ordered him to show the Jews no mercy. The first Jewish prisoner taken on that day was crucified in sight of his friends and countrymen, and from that time forward this barbarous death was

meted out to hundreds. On the night of that fierce fight the Romans were thrown into a panic by the fall of a tower ninety feet high, which they had built on their embankment, to enable them to throw darts and arrows into the city.

Titus soon after gained possession of Bezetha, the northern suburb of the city, and of Agrippa's wall which surrounded it. The conflict became still more terrible. John and his Zealots defended the Castle of Antonia and the Temple Mount, while Simon, the son of Gioras, and his soldiers defended the remainder of the second wall. By day the desperate courage of the Jews often gave them small advantages; though beyond the walls Roman discipline generally succeeded in driving back the enemy. At night both parties remained on the alert, — the Jews fearing a night attack, the Romans some sudden surprise. The organized armies were under the direction of two skilful leaders, — the youthful Titus, on the one hand, and, on the other, Simon, the son of Gioras. John of Gischala rarely ventured from the precincts of the Temple, dreading to fall by treachery into the hands of his rival, though his men joined with those of Simon in attacking the Romans, and in defending the city.

At one time Titus was greatly exasperated by the result of an appeal made to him for mercy by a man named Castor, who offered to capitulate, and demanded a hearing. Titus commissioned Josephus to conduct the parley; but Josephus was too well aware of his own unpopularity in Jerusalem to venture within speaking distance of the wall. That duty was therefore given to one Æneas, who received a large stone from the battlement upon his head. Castor then set fire to the tower from which he had spoken, and to all appearance leaped, with its garrison, into the flames; they threw themselves, however, into one of the subterranean caverns beneath the city.

The second wall was gained by the Romans a few days later, and there only remained to be besieged or defended the Temple Mount and Mount Zion. Titus, aware that the men who so stubbornly resisted him were not

citizens of Jerusalem, but provincials who had from without entered the city, was desirous of propitiating the real inhabitants of Jerusalem, and issued orders that no houses should be set on fire, and no massacres committed. But this order simply turned the wrath of the insurgents against those supposed to be in a measure under Roman protection. Next came street fighting, in which the Roman legionaries were worsted; but soon they had a powerful ally: provisions ran short, and the besieged were threatened with famine.

At this time came a pause, that hunger might have time to do its work; and Titus, in order to impress the people of Jerusalem with the magnitude and magnificence of his forces, and the hopelessness of resistance, held a great review on a plain outside the city, once covered with luxuriant gardens, orchards, and shade trees.

The troops defiled slowly within sight of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. It must have been a splendid sight, this Roman army "glorious to behold," as it came —

> "Flashing back its lines of light,
> Rank upon rank in surges bright,
> Like a broad sea of gold."

But it did not produce the expected effect on the multitude who watched it as it wound round the wall of Jerusalem.

Then, as a last effort, Josephus was employed to harangue his people, and induce them to capitulate. He records the long address he made them, but it was of no effect. The Jews scoffed at him, reproached him, and hurled darts at him, but he had taken care to place himself in a coign of vantage.

The only effect of what he said was that those who could get away attempted to desert the city. Titus allowed such as could escape to pass through his lines unmolested.

Famine in the devoted city grew more and more terrible. Any man who still looked hale or strong was supposed to have concealed a supply of food; his house was searched, and he himself executed. Horrible stories are told of those days, when even natural affection gave place to hunger.

One almost incredible instance is related of a mother who devoured her babe. "If any wretches," says Dean Milman, "crept out near the Roman posts to pick up some miserable herbs or vegetables, they were plundered on their return; and if they entreated in the name of God that some portion at least might be left them of what they had obtained at the hazard of their lives, they might think themselves well off if they escaped being killed as well as pillaged."

"The blood runs cold and the heart sickens," says the same writer, "at these unexampled horrors, and we take refuge in a kind of desperate hope that they have been exaggerated by Josephus, their historian; those which follow, perpetrated under his own eyes by his Roman friends, and justified under the all-extenuating plea of necessity, admit of no such reservation, — they must be believed in their naked and unmitigated barbarity."

Such miserable wretches as the Romans might pick up prowling for food outside the walls, Titus had caused to be scourged, tortured, and then crucified. Sometimes as many as five hundred of these miserable beings were seen at once by their friends and fellow-countrymen writhing on crosses in full sight from the walls. Such things only exasperated the defenders of Jerusalem, and Titus, whenever he appeared, was met by howls of rage and insult from those who saw him as they manned the defences.

On the 27th of May all was ready for a final assault, when suddenly what seemed at first an earthquake crumbled the embankment, and overthrew the engines of the Romans. The place where they were posted had been undermined by the Jewish leaders; pitch, sulphur, tar, and other combustibles had been placed beneath, and as soon as these were set on fire an explosion took place. A few days later a sally, made by the followers of Simon, set fire to the great battering-ram, a mighty engine which the Jews themselves had called Vico the Victorious, and on which the Romans had counted to enable them to complete the siege.

A furious attack followed this attempt to destroy the

engines. The Roman legions wavered; the Jews, utterly regardless of self-defence, pushed fiercely on. Again Titus managed in part to retrieve the day, but he could not restore the engines. A council of war was held, and it was determined to starve the city into surrender. Then came the days when were fulfilled the words of prophecy: "Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side." Yet, in spite of the terrible prediction that throughout the siege had been shouted through the streets by the voice of Joshua, the son of Hanan, "Woe to this city! Woe!" there were many Jews who believed that at the last moment the hand of the Lord would be lifted against their enemies, and that His people and His Temple would be saved. The poor fanatic who preached woe was at last silenced by a stone from a Roman engine, and died crying out, "And woe to me also!" But there were other prophets among the Zealots, who kept up the spirits of their party by assuring all who would listen to them of ultimate success.

The city was filled with corpses; the living had not strength to bury the dead. The most miserable wretches were the *inhabitants* — the population of Jerusalem; the soldiery still had provisions, for they plundered every house and hiding place where food might possibly be found. At last, unable to bear the stench of the decaying bodies of those who died of starvation, or were killed while they tried to defend their morsels of food, the soldiers flung the carcasses over the wall into the ravines below.

Titus, as he rode round the city, saw these corpses rotting, and the ground reeking with blood, wherever the feet of his horse trod. "He groaned," says Josephus, "and lifting up his hands to heaven called God to witness that this was not *his* work."[1]

[1] As we read of the horrors of these last days in Jerusalem "those days of tribulation such as were not since the beginning of the world to this time, nor ever shall be," we are apt to imagine that the Jewish actors in such scenes — John's Zealots, Simon's Idumeans, and the rest — were monsters of wickedness, such as no other spot on

Matthias, the high-priest, who had been restored to his office, though not to any authority, when the dominant party grew ashamed of their election by lot of Phannias, the stone-cutter, had been a submissive instrument in the hands of Simon son of Gioras, the Idumean, whom indeed he had invited into Jerusalem some months before. He was now accused of intelligence with the Romans, and was executed in their sight, together with three of his sons. His only prayer was that he might be put to death before his children, but this was denied him. The father and mother of Josephus were sent to prison, and fifteen members of the Sanhedrim were put to death at the same time.

Ruthless and fanatical as were the defenders of Jerusalem, in a military point of view no city was ever defended with more skill or desperate courage. The Roman army was growing dispirited. New engines had been constructed to operate against the third wall (that which surrounded the sacred mount, and Zion). But should the Jews for the

earth could have bred. But, as Carlyle sáys of actors in the French Revolution, "Human nature had flung off formulas, and came out human." And in times of great distress an excitable people will act, even now, with the same utter selfishness, and the same ruthless cruelty. We have seen this in a recent shipwreck; and while writing these pages I read a review in the London Spectator of *Les Mémoires du Sergent Burgogne* (1812–13). What is there said of the conduct of the unhappy French on the Retreat from Moscow seems to me exactly parallel to the scenes that took place more than eighteen hundred years before in Jerusalem, — with this excuse in favor of the Jews: The people plundered and maltreated by the provincial outlaws in Jerusalem were their bitter enemies. Both parties hated each other. The inhabitants were believed to be anxious to surrender the city, and to hail the Romans as deliverers; while the French soldiers were not only fellow-countrymen, but companions in arms. "The note of retreat (from Moscow) was supreme selfishness. The instinct of self-preservation dominated every other. When men are maddened by hunger they lose all sense of humanity, of right, or wrong. They become for the time wild beasts. The troops marched on with bent heads, looking neither to the right nor to the left. Those who fell and were too weak to rise were left to perish, and perhaps theirs was the better part. If by good fortune a man found a loaf or a potato, his comrades would tear it from him, and then fight among themselves for the morsels."

third time burn the siege engines the reduction of the city would be hopeless, since the Romans had cut down every tree within ten miles of the place to make these, their last hope. Titus could not afford to be unsuccessful; the fortunes of the Flavian dynasty hung on his triumph over the Jews.

On the first of July the Jews attacked the engines with sword and flame; but their attempt failed. The Romans worked desperately to undermine the walls near the Castle of Antonia, and during the night of July 4[1] the wall suddenly fell at a place which had been undermined before by John of Gischala when he was attacking the conservative leaders who had taken refuge in the castle. But when the Romans in the morning rushed to the breach, they found themselves confronted by an inner wall.

Eleven men, under the leadership of a Syrian, — a common soldier named Sabinus, — volunteered as a forlorn hope to scale this wall. Sabinus was killed, after displaying desperate valor, and all his men either perished or were wounded. On July 5, however, at dead of night, twenty soldiers of the guard with a standard bearer and a trumpeter, crept silently up the breach, noiselessly slew the sentinels, and ordered the trumpeter to blow a furious blast. The watch fled in terror, believing that the whole Roman army was upon them, as indeed it soon was, and Titus had possession of the Castle of Antonia. Next came the attack upon the Temple Mount. Simon and John, uniting their forces, fought furiously to defend the entrance to the Temple. After ten hours of continuous combat Titus drew off his men. Josephus relates many interesting instances of individual prowess. Both sides showed determined courage, but the city celebrated in sacred song as "the joy of the whole earth" was now, so far as its stones, its walls, and its buildings were concerned, devoted to destruction.

The daily sacrifice had ceased for want of victims, and this circumstance extinguished hope in the hearts of many Jews, who till then had believed, as John of Gischala

[1] Or the 17th, there is some doubt as to the date.

shouted to his enemy Josephus, that "they had no cause to fear the taking of the city, for it was the city of God."

At this time there were men in the Roman camp who had once been leaders of the conservative party in Jerusalem, and who had contrived to desert the city. These men, with Josephus, were desired by Titus to persuade, if possible, the Zealots who were preparing to defend the Temple as if it were a fortress, not to profane so holy a place by making it the scene of a fierce conflict. John of Gischala, however, would not capitulate. In the strength of his stronghold was his only trust.

On the twelfth day of July Titus sent a force of picked men to attack the Temple, while he watched them from a lofty turret on the Castle of Antonia, but it was more than three weeks before the Romans could be said to have gained any decided advantage. The immense stones of the Temple resisted the force of their battering-rams, and several of their eagles had been taken.

There is great diversity of opinion as to whether Titus wished to spare or to destroy the Temple. On the one hand he was undoubtedly desirous to gratify Berenice, and was surrounded and greatly influenced by Jews who, though bitterly opposed to the Zealots and Idumeans conducting the defence, were most anxious to save the Temple. On the other hand, he may have thought that to secure to the Jews the stronghold of their religion was only to give occasion to fresh outbreaks of fanaticism. It seems probable on the whole that we may trust Josephus that Titus, until circumstances grew too strong for him, would have gladly spared the Temple of that God who, he believed, had inspired his captive to prophesy his elevation to imperial power. While the floors of the Temple courts were red with streams of blood he attempted, Josephus says, to make a last remonstrance. After reproaching the defenders of the Temple for defiling their sacred place with carnage, he cried: "I call on your Gods, I call on my whole army, I call on the Jews who are with me, to witness that I do not force you

to this crime. Come forth and fight in any other place, and no Roman shall violate your sacred edifice!" But John of Gischala and his Zealots had no intention of surrendering their stronghold. Some of them still trusted that the heathen would not be permitted to set foot in its Holy of Holies.

On the night of one of the first days of August the Roman commander chose thirty men from every hundred to make an assault upon the Temple, but after eight hours' fighting the Romans had not gained a foot of ground.

Then they levelled part of the Antonia, and used the débris to fill up the chasm which divided it from the Temple, making a broad way, over which their engines were brought up and put in operation. The Jews, with desperate bravery, fought on.

At that the Romans mounted on the roof of the cloister, or porch, on the west side of the Temple. But the Jews had laid a train of combustibles beneath this place, and immediately set them on fire. The destruction of the Romans who had mounted to the roof of the west cloister was terrible. Deeds of desperate valor took place under the eyes of the young Cæsar, who stood on the summit of Antonia, unable to help his soldiers in their peril, bitterly bemoaning their fate.

When a great part of the western cloister of the outer court of the Temple had been burned the Romans set fire to that on the north side, and laid it in ashes, down to the spot where it overlooked the brook Hebron.

On August 8 the Roman engineers began to batter the eastern cloister of the inner court, where on the High Altar the priests offered sacrifice. Repulsed on all sides, Titus gave orders to fire the closed gates of the inner court, which were covered with plates of silver. The fire and smoke enveloped the defenders. For eighteen hours the fire went on, consuming the whole range of the cloisters.

Then a council of war was held to determine whether the magnificent Temple structure, built by Herod and adorned with costly offerings from heathen princes and

from Jewish devotees, should be delivered over to destruction.

The council was divided in opinion, but Titus, who had the casting vote, inclined to spare what might be considered one of the wonders of the Roman world, and the soldiers were ordered to subdue the flames in the porches.

It was August 10, the anniversary of the destruction of the first Temple by the King of Babylon; it was night, and Titus had retired to rest in the Castle of Antonia, when a man roused him from his sleep with news that the main building of the Temple was on fire. A soldier, without orders, had flung a blazing brand into the Sanctuary. The young commander rushed in haste to stay the work of destruction. It was too late. The glittering and glorious edifice was in flames.

Titus and his officers could now look into the interior of the sacred edifice, which no heathen eyes had seen since the days of Pompey the Great. Its splendor filled them with wonder, and no doubt with covetousness. They would have stayed the mad fury of the conflagration, but the flames were beyond their control.

Before the eyes of the soldiers were displayed treasures of gold, and every other kind of riches. All were mad for pillage; they believed that great wealth was laid up in the treasure chambers. Blinded and choked they rushed through flame and smoke into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Titus, struck with awe and wonder, still hoped to stay the flames, but his men, mad with excitement, were beyond the control even of Roman discipline, and the sacred building had to be left to its fate.

In a description of the scenes that followed, Josephus employed all his eloquence. The slaughter that went on all night was even more appalling than the fury of the conflagration. John of Gischala, at the head of some of his men, cut his way out of the Temple, and found refuge on the opposite mount in what was called the Upper City. The Temple furniture, much coveted by the legionaries, was in part plundered, but more was destroyed.

Every wall and every building on the Temple Mount was swept away, except a gallery which formed part of an inner cloister; here were gathered a crowd of Jews, for the most part women and children, deceived by a false prophet who had preached that God had commanded all his people to go up to His Holy Temple where He would display His mighty Power in the hour of their necessity. But all perished, either by massacre or by fire.

When nothing was left upon the Temple Mount but smoking ruins, the Roman army marched in over the ashes, planted their standards where the sanctuary had stood, and paid them the usual worship.

The plunder acquired by the soldiery, in spite of much that perished in the flames, was so great that for a time in Syria the price of gold declined to half its value.

The upper city on Mount Zion still held out. Simon, son of Gioras, and John of Gischala had found refuge there, with the most determined of their followers. But even to these desperate men resistance appeared hopeless. Many demanded a conference. This Titus granted. He offered to spare their lives on condition of immediate surrender. They asked permission to retire into the wilderness with their wives and children. But Titus declined to allow so formidable a body of fighting men to go at large. Hard pressed, many of the richer Jews endeavored to desert, or to make terms for themselves with the Romans. Those who were spared were sold as slaves. One priest saved his life by surrendering to Titus such of the treasures of the Temple as he had secreted, vessels and candlesticks of pure gold, and, above all, the official vestments of the high-priest.

On September 7 breaches were made in the last bulwark that defended the besieged in the Upper City, by mighty engines constructed with great difficulty, owing to the scarcity of timber. Then the courage of the bravest fell. Many of the most energetic leaders plunged into the subterranean chambers that underlie Jerusalem. John and Simon endeavored to force their way out of the city into

the Vale of Siloam; but being baffled in this attempt, even their courage failed them, and they too disappeared into the caverns underground.

By September 8 all resistance was at an end. Men exhausted by fighting were driven, together with non-combatants, — the inhabitants of Jerusalem, — into a small inner court of the Temple, which had escaped the burning. Of these all who had been in arms against the Romans were put to death, except indeed seven hundred young men, the tallest and the handsomest, who were reserved to grace the triumph of the conqueror. Others were sent to Egypt to work in fetters, or were distributed in the provinces to perish in the amphitheatres. Those under seventeen were sold as slaves. It took some days to effect this division of the captives, during which many died for lack of food, — some, because no food had been offered them; others, who had food, because they would not eat. What a contrast between heathen and Christian civilization does this picture present, when we think of the treatment of captives in the last war between civilized nations in the nineteenth century!

In the dark underground drains and passages recently revealed to us by the English Palestine Exploration Society, much wealth and many corpses were found; many prisoners were also made there by the Romans. John of Gischala surrendered himself, and was condemned to lifelong imprisonment. But no trace could be found of Simon, son of Gioras; he was supposed to have effected his escape in some mysterious manner.

The Temple, as Herod had rebuilt it, was destroyed to its foundations, but these, consisting of the mighty blocks of stone brought by Solomon from Tyre, remain unto this day. At their foot is the Wall of Wailing, to which the Jews of Jerusalem (excluded from that part of the city where their Temple stood of old) come on occasions of solemnity to wail and pray. Thither on June 27, 1898, came a Jewish congregation, the "sons of Jacob," led by their rabbi, and after they had sung Psalms xviii., xx., xxvii., xxxv., lxxxiii.,

and cxliv., all joined in an especial prayer composed for the occasion by their rabbi, on behalf of the people of the United States, — "engaged in a struggle, not to make broad their territory, or to conquer neighbors, but to procure liberty to captives, and to deliver impoverished people from the wrath of their despoilers. . . . Help them, O God," he continued; "send Thine angels before them, and let them succeed, whithersoever they turn. Uphold the hand of the ruler of their country, and crown its heroes with the crown of victory. And may a redeemer come to Zion. Amen."

Eighteen hundred and thirty years ago Jerusalem lay desolate. Her glory had departed, her Temple was destroyed, all was over. Not only had Titus triumphed over his enemies, and assured the imperial throne of the known world to the obscure family of the Flavii, but the gods of Rome had gained a mighty victory over the local Deity of the Jews, the most dreaded, the most powerful, the most mysterious of Oriental divinities. Not that Titus probably cared even as much for Jupiter as he did for Jehovah, the God in whose name exaltation and success had been prophesied to him when he had little expectation of being promoted to the throne of the Cæsars, but as a Roman soldier he was proud that Roman arms should triumph over the most powerful of deities. The more he half-believed in the majesty and might of the God of the Jews, the greater must have become his satisfaction at the thought that he had humbled that mighty Being, had levelled His Temple, had massacred His priests, destroyed His worship, and desecrated the mount on which for centuries He had been supposed to display His presence and His power.

Little did Titus foresee the triumph of that God whom he believed himself to have humbled. Little could he anticipate that in the short space of three hunded and eighty years, the Cæsar and his people would together kneel before His shrine. Little could he foresee that civilization and the worship of the God whom he thought he had overthrown,

would go hand in hand over the whole earth, into lands that he had never dreamed of, into islands of the sea where empires should be founded mightier than that of Rome; into the heart of Africa; into continents whose existence would remain unknown to Europe for fourteen hundred years; and that Rome herself would claim to be the centre of the worship of Him whose Temple at Jerusalem he had destroyed.

Eighteen months before the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple, the Capitol in Rome with its temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, the city's local divinity, was destroyed by fire (Dec. 19, A. D. 68) in a time of general massacre and incendiarism. But the civilized world takes little interest in the conflagration of the Capitol, beyond vaguely regretting the destruction of the historical documents and splendid statuary it may have contained; while the worship in the Jewish Temple, the Temple itself, its construction, its very stones, its final ruin, all are of living interest to millions of people to-day. The ground on which the Temple stood, though now occupied by a mosque, is, by that very building, kept from further desecration, and at least the voice of prayer goes up in it, announcing that there is but One God, — no heathen deity, but the God of the Jews, of the Christians, and of the Mohammedans, though to the profession of faith in Him by these last, alas! is added, "and Mahomet is His prophet!"

From the date when the last defenders of Jerusalem were cut off (Sept. 8, A. D. 70) and the city "was laid low, even to the ground," until the year A. D. 122, when in a scoffing spirit the Emperor Hadrian endeavored to rebuild Jerusalem, giving it a new Roman name, Elia Capitolina, the city remained a heap of ruins. The wall to the west was left standing by Titus to shelter the tenth legion, and ever after a strong guard was left upon the spot, "lest at some moment," says M. Renan, "the conflagration might blaze out that smouldered under those calcined rocks. Men trembled lest the spirit of life should return to those corpses, which seemed from below the charnel heap to lift their

arms in affirmation that there still remained with *them* the promise of eternity!"

The fire smouldering beneath those ruins did indeed destroy paganism, pagan Rome, pagan Gods, pagan emperors, and pagan power, though it was not by rapid conflagration, but by slow burning from within, that it compassed their destruction.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE CONQUEROR.

TITUS appears to have remained some weeks after the fall of Jerusalem in the neighborhood of the city, offering sacrifices to his gods and giving largess to his legionaries. The spoils of the city, and the captives, he sent to Cæsarea. October was too late in the season to undertake a safe voyage to Rome. He spent his time, therefore, in feasting and in giving shows in various cities. Of what took place at these celebrations in honor of his victory I will borrow an account from the "Antichrist" of M. Renan:

"Troops of Jewish captives whom he dragged about with him were cast to wild beasts, burned alive, or forced to fight one another. At Paneas on the twenty-fourth of October (his brother Domitian's birthday), more than twenty-five hundred Jews perished in the flames, or else in the horrid sports of the amphitheatre. At Beyrout (Berytus) on the seventeenth of November, an equal number were sacrificed to celebrate the birthday of Vespasian. Hatred of Jews was the ruling passion of the Syrian towns, and these frightful massacres were hailed with delight. The most shocking thing of all is, perhaps, that Josephus and Agrippa did not quit Titus during this time, and were witnesses of those atrocities."

It does not, however, appear that M. Renan had authority for asserting the presence of the Jewish friends and followers of Titus at the cruel diversions of the amphitheatre. From the earliest introduction of such sports into Palestine the Jews had expressed their abhorrence of them. As Josephus submitted to Titus his work upon the Jewish War before it was given to the public, we can easily understand

that although he and others might not have chosen to take part in such spectacles, he would not have put his absence upon record, nor have expressed pain and abhorrence at such a barbarous mode of triumph, out of consideration for the feelings of his patron.

Titus during his journey presented to Antioch winged cherubim (not those, however, that had once overshadowed the Ark in the Holy of Holies). "This curious trophy was set in front of the great western gate of Antioch, which took the name of the Gate of the Cherubim. Near this he dedicated a four-horse chariot to the moon, in gratitude for the help given him by that luminary during the siege. At Daphne he erected a theatre on the site of the Jewish synagogue, with an inscription signifying that this structure was built from the spoil got in Judea."

While Titus was enjoying the feasts and games that celebrated his hard-won victory, Jerusalem was left in charge of the tenth legion, under the command of Terentius Rufus. The soldiers employed themselves in seeking more plunder in the drains and subterranean passages underlying the city. There too they made many prisoners, and found the corpses of many Jews who had perished by famine.

One night, as some soldiers were resting among the ruins of the Temple, there rose suddenly out of the ground at their very feet an apparition. It was tall, gaunt, clothed in white, and wrapped in a purple mantle. It waited in silence to be spoken to, when they should recover themselves. At last they asked who it was they saw before them. The figure said, "Call your general." Terentius Rufus was summoned in all haste, and then the ghastly figure said that he was the Idumean leader, Simon, the son of Gioras. When all was lost he had leaped into a passage underground, with a party of men who were workers in stone and iron. They had food with them, and their purpose had been to dig their way out of the cavern and escape, but before this could be accomplished their food had been consumed. Simon's purpose in so strangely

presenting himself was doubtless to inspire both the Roman soldiers and the remnant of the Jews with an idea of his resurrection, — his messiahship. He had succeeded only for a moment. He was arrested, and news of his capture was sent to Titus, who, as the Romans considered Simon (not John of Gischala) the leader of the party of resistance, deemed him a prize of especial value. He was ordered to be set apart to grace the triumph of the conqueror; for the heart of Titus was set on a splendid triumph on his return to Rome. It was to surpass everything of the kind that had ever been seen before. Vespasian, his honest, plain old father, was by no means in this matter of his son's mind, but yielded to his wishes; since the great victory had been really gained by Titus, he was willing to gratify him.

The ceremony was pre-arranged with all the skill in decorative art that had been called forth in processions in the time of Nero. Titus desired especial pains to be taken in the reproduction of local color and minute realism. Surely we may see in this the care of Providence for our instruction. The chief objects in the triumphal procession were to be copied in marble on the Arch of Titus, a monument which has lasted almost intact for more than eighteen centuries to our own day. On it we may see an exact reproduction of sacred objects that had adorned the Temple.

As usual, the ceremonies of the triumph began with religious rites, Vespasian acting as chief pontiff, Titus assisting in the formalities. Then began the procession. I borrow the words of M. Renan to describe it, for no one can paint a scene with swift and vivid strokes so deftly as he can.

"The procession was amazing. All the curiosities and rarities of the world, the costly products of Oriental art, were displayed in it beside the finished work of Greek and Roman skill. The empire having just escaped the greatest danger it had ever run, it would seem the most pompous display must be made of its wealth and splendor. Scaffoldings on wheels, three or four stages in height, were the



TITUS.

objects of universal admiration. Here were seen displayed all the episodes of the war, each series ending with an exhibition to the life of the strange figure made by Simon, son of Gioras, as he emerged from his hiding-place, and the method of his capture. The pale features and sunken eyes of the captives were disguised under the superb garments they were dressed in. In the midst was Simon Bar-Gioras himself, conducted in great pomp to his death. Then came the spoils of the Temple, — the golden table, the golden candlestick with its seven branches, the purple veil of the Holy of Holies, and, to end the series of trophies, the captive, the vanquished, the especially guilty one — the Book of the Law. A parade of victorious soldiers closed the procession. Vespasian and Titus were borne in two separate chariots. Titus was radiant; while Vespasian, seeing in all this pomp only a day lost for business, was very weary of it, and did not try to hide the dull look of a busy man expressing his impatience that the procession did not move faster, and grumbling to himself, 'A very pretty scrape I have got into! . . . Well! I have deserved it. What a fool I have made of myself! . . . a man of my age too!' Domitian, sumptuously attired and mounted on a noble charger, pranced here and there about his father and his elder brother.

"Thus they arrived, by the Sacred Way, at the reconstructed temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, the usual goal of the triumphal march. At the foot of the Capitoline Hill they made a halt in order to avoid the barbarous part of the ceremony, the execution of the chief captive. This hateful custom was observed to the letter. Simon was taken out from the troop of prisoners, and dragged with a rope about his neck, the butt of unseemly insults, to the Tarpeian Rock, where he was put to death. When a cry proclaimed that the enemy of Rome was no more, there went up a mighty shout, and the sacrifices began. After the customary invocations, the princes retired to the Palatine, and the rest of the day was spent by all the city in festival and

rejoicing. The Book of the Law and the hangings of the Temple were carried to the Imperial Palace. The furnishings of gold, especially the table for shew-bread and the candlestick, were laid aside in a great building constructed by Vespasian over against the Palatine, across the Sacred Way, called the Temple of Peace, which made a sort of museum under the Flavian emperors, but was entirely destroyed by fire in the reign of Commodus. . . . Father and son on this occasion took each the title of Imperator, but refused that of Judaicus, either because a jest of Cicero's had in the time of Pompey cast some scorn on it, or to show that the victory in Judea was not a campaign against a foreign nation, but was only the suppression of a revolt of slaves; or, again, possibly from some secret motive, such as Josephus and Philostratus have hinted at;" namely, that Titus ascribed his success, not to his own valor or to that of his legions, but to the wrath of an offended God against the Jews.

There were still three fortresses untaken; two of them were in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea, the other at no great distance from Jerusalem: Machærus, Masada, and Herodium. When these at last fell into the hands of the Romans, the massacres and the crucifixion of whole troops of Jewish captives were renewed. The Zealots in Masada made one of the most heroic defences during the war. But to resist and then to die in the struggle was their only hope, — they could expect no mercy. When they could hold out no longer they heaped together their property, and, falling on the pile, slew one another; the last man setting fire to the whole. This defence of their last stronghold by the Zealots took place about two years after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

Judea was left desolate; the lands of the Jews who had perished by the sword, or were in exile or captivity, were sold by order of the frugal Vespasian; the hills on which Jerusalem had stood he annexed to his own private domain. A tax was laid on all Jews throughout the Roman empire, amounting to the same sum that Judea had paid annually, *per capita*, into the Temple Treasury.

The little band of Jews who had been the personal friends of Titus — Josephus, Berenice, Agrippa, and Tiberius Alexander — went with him to Rome. At one time the imperial court circle was agitated by fears that Berenice would become the wife of Titus, and so empress of the world. What hindered this, — whether as a pious Jewess she was unwilling to incur the odium of her nation, like her sister Drusilla, by marrying a heathen, and preferred to retain over Titus her great influence without marriage, or whether Titus was deterred by public opinion, and the example of his father, from making an unsuitable alliance, — we do not know. Gossip and scandal were rife in Rome in those corrupt days. The reputation of no woman was safe from the strife of tongues; and Juvenal, whose pen blackened the character of Berenice, very likely put no faith in female virtue. Agrippa remained a resident of Rome. He does not seem ever to have gone back to his dominions. A prætorship and an accession of territory were, however, given him, and he enjoyed the favor of Vespasian. We do not know the date of his death. Drusilla, and her son by Felix, perished in the great eruption of Vesuvius. With Agrippa the dynasty of the Herodians became extinct.

Josephus lived in Rome in great favor with three of its emperors, Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. Besides which, he enjoyed the friendship of the Empress Domitia. His estates were exempted from taxation, and he was always treated with great honor. One proof of his influence with Titus is told in his autobiography.

"When Jerusalem was taken, Titus offered him any boon that he would ask. He chose the Sacred Books and the lives of his brother and fifty friends. (His father and mother had been imprisoned and put to death by the Zealots.) He was afterwards permitted to select one hundred and ninety of his friends and relatives from the multitude shut up in the Temple to be sold as slaves. A short time after, near Tekoa, he saw a number of persons writhing in the agonies of crucifixion; among the rest, three of his former intimate associates. He rode off with all speed to

Titus to entreat their pardon; it was granted, but two of them expired as they were being taken down from the cross, though one survived."[1]

Josephus had three sons (but only one, Hyrcanus, lived to man's estate), and he had considerable discomfort in his matrimonial relations. One wife he discarded, another he formally divorced, and we may hope he was happy with his third, a Jewess from the island of Crete, a lady of wealth and position, and, as he tells us, of admirable virtue. In Rome he wrote a "History of the Jewish War" in the tongue commonly spoken among Jews in the East, for he intended it for the instruction of his countrymen beyond the Euphrates. He afterwards translated it into Greek. Both Titus and Agrippa bore testimony to its accuracy; though its bias is unquestionably in favor of his patrons in Rome. Titus ordered a copy to be placed in the public library, and signed it with his own hand, in testimony of its being an authentic memorial of his own times.

About the year A. D. 93, Josephus published his great work on the "Antiquities of the Jews." This book is the Bible History, presented in such a way as to make a favorable impression upon Greek and Roman readers. He wrote also an answer to Apion, a literary man in Alexandria, who had made a collection of calumnious stories against the Jews. Finally, when he was about fifty-seven years of age, during the reign of Domitian, he published his autobiography, especially intended to defend himself against attacks made on him by his countrymen concerning his administration in Galilee. He lived in high favor with the three Flavian emperors, was enriched by them, and made a Roman citizen. The date of his death is unknown.

In the middle ages the writings of Josephus were in great repute among the Christians, while the Jews maligned him as a traitor to his nation. Christians went so far as to declare him to have been an Ebionite Christian, that is, a Christian who continued to observe the Ceremonial Law of

[1] Dean Milman's "History of the Jews."

the Jews. There is not a particle of evidence to sustain this opinion.

His brief remarks in the "Antiquities" concerning our Lord have been commonly considered a Christian interpolation into his work on the "Antiquities of the Jews," but M. Renan has accepted them as genuine. Indeed, a man who had passed several years in Galilee, not a generation after the era of our Lord's preaching, must of necessity have heard much of Him, and of His miracles. Had Josephus never alluded to Him, it would have been *prima facie* evidence that he desired to suppress all account of such a personage. The passage is as follows: "Now there was about this time" (that is, during the administration of Pontius Pilate) "Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, — a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was Christ, and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those who loved him at first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold. These and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day."

The triumph of Titus, the three hundred and twentieth of such pageants, exceeded them all in splendor. It not only celebrated Rome's triumph over a stubborn and rebellious people, who had once vanquished the Roman legions, but the exhibition of the spoils from God's Temple at Jerusalem, was supposed to indicate that the might of Jehovah had fallen before that of the Roman war-gods and the Roman arms.

The Ark of the Covenant was not carried in the procession, for there was no Ark in the Holy of Holies when Titus entered it, neither was any there when Pompey was so much impressed by finding that the Jews worshipped a Deity who was a Spirit, with no outward symbol of His presence; but there were the table for shewbread; the cups

for frankincense, which stood upon it; the silver trumpets; and the golden candlestick made after the pattern of that which Moses was commanded to place in the Tabernacle.

These objects, copied in sculpture from the originals, we ourselves may see to this day upon the Arch of Titus, at least in photography. The table of shewbread was of silver. It had originally a border of gold around the top of it, which appears to have been torn off in some of the spoliations of the Temple which took place in the days of the later Asmoneans. On this table every Sabbath were placed twelve loaves made of fine flour, six in a pile, and on the top of each pile was placed a small cup containing frankincense. The cakes, when fresh ones were provided, were given to the officiating priests, but the frankincense was burnt. The cups that contained it are shown in the sculpture.

The silver trumpets, each a little less than a cubit long, which were first used for signals to the people in their camp in the wilderness, were by the Romans borne upon the table of shewbread.

The golden candlestick, the most conspicuous object in the procession, was not perfect. The three tall legs on which it had stood had been wrenched off, and were replaced by a Roman pedestal, adorned with eagles and mythical animals, which the Jews never would have admitted into their Temple.

We must remember the construction of the Holy Temple, after whose pattern no Jew was permitted to build a house. It was not large, and consisted of two chambers, — the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Neither of these had windows. The Holy of Holies (entered only by the high-priest, and that only once a year) was shut off from the Holy Place by the "veil of the Temple," and light was admitted only when that veil was withdrawn. The Holy Place was lighted by the great seven-branched candlestick, one lamp on which was never suffered to go out. It must have been tall, for the priests stood upon steps to light it, or to obtain fire from the light that was ever burn-

ing. It had a central column, and six branches, three on on each side. It must have been magnificent, but was certainly not beautiful.

"We see," says a divine, who in 1867 gave, in Bristol, England, a lecture, published afterwards as a book, on "The Arch of Titus and the Spoils of the Temple,"[1] — "we see how this Arch subserves a purpose which was never thought of by the Romans who erected it. They built it to perpetuate the triumph of their arms, and of the general who had led them on to victory. They exhibited him and his victorious army in what they deemed the summit of human glory, and with a view to transmit to future times some record of the power and splendor of that empire which, as it had extended to the ends of the known world, they fondly hoped would last forever.

"But the Arch now stands, not a monument to Titus, but to the God of the Jews. The spoils that Titus bore in triumph from His Temple establish the truth of His Word, the claims of His kingdom, and the prophetical foresight of Him who, named King of the Jews by Pilate, has, in virtue of that title, established a kingdom destined to surpass the utmost limits of the sway of Rome."

Do we ask what has become of the original spoils of gold and silver that in the transitory triumph of Titus feasted the eyes of the heathen multitude, who probably regarded them as nothing more than relics of the worship of another of those deities who had, from time to time, submitted to the Roman war-god as unable to protect their worshippers?

Vespasian deposited his spoils in a new temple, the largest and most beautiful in Rome, the richest also in the treasures it contained. But this beautiful shrine that was to have been a perpetual memorial of his successful career was burnt to the ground after standing a little longer than a century, and as no one ever knew what caused the fire that consumed it; its destruction was looked upon as an omen of disaster sent by the gods.

[1] Rev. W. Knight, The Arch of Titus.

Traditions say, however, that the spoils of Jerusalem did not perish in this temple; but how they were saved (if they were saved), and by whom, is not known. A story was long current that the golden candlestick was lost in the Tiber, but nothing substantiates that report.

When Genseric the Vandal plundered Rome in A.D. 455, he sent on board his ships all the money he obtained, and golden treasures and jewels, the spoil of Christian churches; also, it is said, "Hebrew vessels that Titus had brought to Rome after the capture of Jerusalem." With these, and ladies of the imperial family, whom he took captive, he sailed to Africa; and we are told by Procopius, who wrote a history of the Vandal war, that Belisarius, after his campaign in Africa in A.D. 534, brought great spoil to Byzantium; that he there displayed the treasures he had brought home in a minor sort of triumph; that besides the thrones and chariots of the Vandal queen which graced his pageant, he had recovered the spoils carried off by Genseric, amongst them golden vessels which Titus had captured in the Jewish Temple. It having been pointed out that these sacred spoils had always brought misfortune on whoever had possession of them, Justinian is said to have sent them to one of the Christian churches of Jerusalem. If so, they were probably plundered and carried off with other sacred objects by the Persians. But history does not tell us with any certainty that they ever reached any one of the Christian churches that after the days of Constantine sprang up in Syria and Jerusalem; nor do we even know if the table, the candlestick, the cups, and the trumpets borne in the triumph of Titus were included in the spoils carried from Rome to Africa by the King of the Vandals.

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